

"ALL STORIES COMPLETED IN THE PAST MONTH"

LIPPINCOTT'S

MONTHLY MAGAZINE

MARCH 1907

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THE NOVELETTE IS

"THE SMUGGLER"

BY ELLA MIDDLETON TYBOUT

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LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

MARCH, 1907



THE SMUGGLER

BY ELLA MIDDLETON TYBOUT

Author of "The Wife of the Secretary of State," "The Turn of the Tide," Etc.

I.

IF Elizabeth did not indulge in hay-fever every year and consequently have to be very careful about breathing where there is vegetation, it would never have happened; or, rather, we would not have been mixed up with it.

I don't know, after all, whether it was not Gabrielle's gold beads that were to blame, just as much as Elizabeth's hay-fever; for if the string had not broken, everything would have been all right.

Gabrielle and Elizabeth are friends. They know each other's inmost thoughts, and their past lives contain no reservations whatever from one another—which seems a little hard on the men whose pictures they have framed and preserved as relics.

I am their friend also, but I still have a few undivulged thoughts, as well as a modest number of reservations. My name is Eliza, but I prefer to spell it Elise, and perhaps I am a little envious of the other two, having lost my own *alter ego* by her marriage and never replaced her. However, that does not belong to the story, which really begins on the steamer that carried us to Canada.

Elizabeth had heard of an island village up there where hay-fever was unknown, and she read us so many extracts concerning it from a booklet she kept in her work-basket that about the first of June we cut adrift from our respective families and started off to spend the summer there. We could do this with propriety, for we had all passed the pin-

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feather age, although I wish it distinctly understood we were still a long way from being stringy about the throat.

We were sitting on the deck of the steamer on our way up the St. Lawrence, watching the moonlight on the water and enjoying ourselves very much indeed, when a man came around the corner of the cabin and sat down near us, as, of course, he had a perfect right to do. Suddenly Gabrielle, who was next him, jumped up and clutched my arm.

"Come away," she whispered. "Come away."

And, of course, we came forthwith. She was quite pale and trembling when we reached the cabin, and for a few minutes was unable to satisfy our curiosity; but at last she spoke.

"He threw a chair into the water," she said, in an awed voice.

"Oh!" said Elizabeth, with evident disgust, "is *that* all? I thought it was something interesting."

"It was quite enough," insisted Gabrielle. "I was afraid he might throw me next. You should have seen his face and heard him muttering."

"What did he mutter?" Elizabeth liked the whole of a story or none at all.

"I could n't hear. But I think"—Gabrielle glanced around apprehensively—"I think he's crazy, and I don't like being on a boat with an unguarded insane man. You never know what they are going to do. Besides, he looked at me."

I did not blame him there, for Gabrielle is well worth looking at, especially when she is gazing at the moon with the uplifted expression she reserves for that purpose. I sometimes wonder why she does n't think some man on earth worth it, but she says distance lends enchantment in such matters, and I suppose she knows her own affairs best.

"Perhaps his keeper is somewhere around," speculated Elizabeth. "Let's go back and see if he is still there."

So we reconnoitred stealthily, and saw him sitting quietly smoking and not looking at all dangerous—a rather tall, spare man in blue serge clothes, with a cap pulled down over his eyes, and the air of one who is quite satisfied with his surroundings. It was a cool night, and the deck was almost deserted, so he had our secluded corner behind the cabin all to himself, and we could stand just outside the door and examine him at our leisure.

"He looks like anybody else," said Elizabeth, plainly disappointed.

"I did n't say he had a hump on his back," returned Gabrielle indignantly. "I said he threw a chair overboard—and so he did."

"It is a new way of beginning a flirtation," I murmured, "but customs differ in various places. Perhaps you should have sent your chair after it, by way of acknowledging the attention. Oh!"

For at that moment he leaned forward, looked with interest at the

chair beside him, felt its back and legs, poised it lightly in the air, and shot it over the railing into the water below, where we saw it bobbing in the foam in our wake.

"*There!*" triumphed Gabrielle. "Now what do you say?"

We said nothing, for just then he reached for another chair. This time, however, he was not bent on destruction, for he merely detached a dark object hanging on its back. For the second time Gabrielle clutched my unfortunate arm, which was quite bruised with her attentions.

"It's my bag!" she exclaimed. "My new shopping bag. I left it hanging on my chair—and he's opening it! Oh, the wretch!"

The "wretch" proceeded to investigate the contents of the bag, and carefully examined each article as he drew it forth. First a pair of gloves, and then a handkerchief, which he held critically to his nose after scrutinizing the monogram.

"I hope he likes it!" ejaculated Gabrielle, in an indignant whisper.

Next a small powder puff and a bit of chamois skin (regarded with tolerant amusement), a stubby pencil minus a point and much dented from thoughtful biting (having been used to calculate our expenses), twenty-five cents, three street-car tickets, a latch-key, and a square card, at which he looked long and earnestly.

"It is a good thing you wear your money around your neck," remarked Elizabeth, but Gabrielle pointed an outraged finger at the unconscious blue serge back.

"It is our picture," she said—"we three together. Did you ever!"

Finding the moonlight not bright enough for his purpose, he moved nearer the cabin window, happening as he did so to glance behind him. Springing to his feet, he lifted his cap and advanced toward us, bag in hand, but with one accord we turned and fled. It was best to take no chances within reach of his hands. We had no desire to follow the chairs over the railing.

I went with Gabrielle and Elizabeth to their state-room, where we spent some time in discussing the strange incident and the fact that our picture was still in the supposed lunatic's possession. At length I bade them good-night and set out to find my own berth, as we had not been fortunate enough to get adjoining rooms.

In the saloon I found the stewardess, who at once accosted me, with an apologetic cough.

"Oh, if you please, miss," she said, "could I speak to you?"

The burden of her speech was a request that I share my state-room with a lady who had not been able to secure one, and who was much fatigued.

"And I thought, miss," she concluded, "that as you have a room to yourself, perhaps you would be so kind as to let her have the spare

berth, since it is the only one on the boat. Would you mind obliging her?"

I did mind very much, and was about to say so in no uncertain language when the stewardess twitched my skirt warningly.

"That's her," she whispered, "over there under the light. Speak low, if you please, miss, and don't go for to refuse the poor dear a bed—don't, now."

I looked in the direction indicated, and felt glad I had not spoken. It was a comparatively young face which rested against the back of the chair, but so pale, so worn, so unutterably weary, that one wondered instinctively what blow fate had seen fit to deal this woman to so rob her of her girlhood. The pitiless glare of the electric light fell directly upon her, accentuating the purple shadows beneath her eyes and the hollows in her cheeks, while her listless pose suggested heart-sickness as well as fatigue. One hand lay on the arm of her chair, and as I advanced toward her I noticed the gleam of her wedding ring.

"The stewardess tells me you have no state-room," I said. "I am alone, and shall be glad to share mine with you."

The heavy lids lifted slowly, and I found myself looking into a pair of wistful dark eyes with an unanswered question in them.

"Thank you," she said, in a sweet, low voice. "You are most kind. I know it is not pleasant to share one's room with a stranger, but I will come gladly, for I am very tired. My husband——"

She paused abruptly and a faint color tinged her cheeks as a man approached and bent over her with an unmistakable air of possession.

"It's no use, Juliet," he said; "I can't get you a state-room at any price, and you are regularly done up, too! We must manage with one of these sofas."

"It is all right, dear," she replied gently. "This young lady is good enough to offer to share her room with me. My husband, Mr. Graham, Miss——"

I supplied the name and bowed to Mr. Graham, looking curiously at him as I listened to his effusive thanks.

The man evidently possessed the vitality his wife lacked. His every movement indicated that he was filled to the finger-tips with vibrant, pulsing life, and one admired him with the admiration one involuntarily accords a perfect specimen of the animal kingdom, whether man or beast. Perhaps his lips were a trifle too full and red, and his teeth rather unpleasantly dazzling when they gleamed under his dark moustache; perhaps, also, there was something in his large black eyes now and then which might cause a woman to blush and turn aside if he looked too long at her; but his manner was very gentle as he bent over his wife, and he collected her wraps and helped her to rise with genuine solicitude.

The stewardess was waiting to show Mrs. Graham the room, and I decided to remain in the saloon until she had retired, so I sat down in a green plush chair and amused myself watching my fellow-passengers and speculating as to their destinations. I had just determined that a fat old lady opposite was the mother of a large family and going to visit a married daughter in the Thousand Islands, when the cabin door opened and Mr. Graham returned alone.

He raised his hat as he passed, hesitated a moment, then seated himself on the arm of an adjoining chair.

"We really owe you a debt of gratitude," he said. "Of course I can get along perfectly well anywhere, but Mrs. Graham is not strong. She has had a tiresome journey, and to-night seemed to be the last straw. I suppose you noticed how awfully done up she was."

"She certainly seemed very tired."

"She will be all right to-morrow, after a night's rest—thanks to you. We are going to spend the summer in Canada. I think the climate there will benefit her, it is so invigorating. And you? Are you also bound for Canada, and are you travelling alone?"

I replied somewhat curtly that I was with friends, for I had no desire to prolong the conversation. Mr. Graham, however, lingered with the manner of one who has something on his mind, but finds expression difficult. At last he rose and said good-night, after offering to look out for our baggage when he landed in the morning.

"And, by the way," he remarked carelessly, "don't be alarmed if my wife should talk a bit in her sleep. She does it now and then, especially if she is overtired. She is apt to dream, I think, and sometimes talks a lot of gibberish. I trust you may not be disturbed, but I thought I ought to warn you. Good-night again, and many thanks."

So Mrs. Graham talked in her sleep! I thought rather ruefully of my prospects for a peaceful night as I slowly walked the length of the cabin—for mine was an outside state-room, and it was necessary to go on deck to reach it.

The moon shone brilliantly, a path of silver light falling across the water, which rippled and sparkled alluringly. I was so fascinated by the beauty of the scene that when I reached my door I did not enter at once, but leaned over the railing, watching the white foam that marked our course, and quite forgetful of the flight of time.

After a while two men approached, and one of them fitted a key in the door next mine. As he stooped to examine the lock, the moonlight shone full upon his face, and I recognized our friend in blue serge with the strange aversion to chairs. I wondered if the person with him was an attendant, and hoped the partition wall was substantial. I was also conscious of a strong desire to waken Gabrielle and Elizabeth and seek shelter with them.

The light was burning in my state-room when at last I forced myself to enter it, and Mrs. Graham lay asleep in the lower berth, her lips slightly parted and her face resting upon her hand. Nature had meant to be kind to this woman, and had been liberal indeed with her gifts. The lashes which swept the pale cheeks were dark and curling, like the luxuriant hair carelessly pushed aside on the pillow, while the face itself, though thin and haggard, had evidently once been a perfect oval, with a singular purity of outline and innocence of expression.

As noiselessly as possible, I made my preparations for the night and climbed into my berth, turning off the electric light with a sense of relief that the switch was within easy reach of my hand.

I lay staring into the darkness, wide awake and alert to every sound. A murmur of voices came from the next room, interspersed with occasional subdued laughter, and at last I heard a window opened, and some one apparently leaned out with an ejaculation of relief.

"Jove, what a night! And to think of wasting it in a cell like this! Blake, you old sinner, have you no soul for the beautiful? Look at the light on the water."

The reply was inaudible. Evidently Blake had gone sensibly to bed, but the voice continued undaunted:

"I say, would n't it be jolly to dive off the railing and swim a mile or so? I declare, I've half a mind to do it!"

I caught my breath apprehensively. Suppose he *should* jump? A match was now scratched, and the odor of a cigarette floated through my slatted blind.

"Maybe you think you're on a St. Lawrence steamer, Blake, but it's nothing of the kind. It is a royal barge belonging to the gods, and it's carrying the Three Graces to attend Apollo—I'm Apollo, you understand, and Venus is n't in it this trip. I think—of course I'm not yet sure—but I think Thalia is the chosen one."

The berth creaked plaintively, and a second match was struck. Apparently Blake considered it wiser to join his patient at the window.

"Don't be an ass," he said, with a slow drawl, but his companion merely whistled a few bars of an old song.

"How happy could I be with either, were t' other dear charmer away,' eh, Blake?" he laughed. "That's the way with this world—always too much or too little."

"Quite enough for you, I think."

"Not a bit of it. The thing I want most I lack, but some time, somehow, I'm going to get it."

Silence for a few moments, then he resumed more gravely:

"Of course it's no end jolly to have you with me, Blake, but it is a queer business for you to take up, and I don't altogether like it. You were built for better things."

"It is interesting work, and said to require special fitness."

"No doubt. Well, 'it's an ill wind,' you know, and, since it blew you my way, I've no kick coming. But, old chap, there is no use in publishing what you are doing, and for both our sakes it is better you should pass simply as my guest."

"As you please, Bennett. Now, for heaven's sake, come to bed."

I don't know whether I had actually been asleep, or whether I was merely in that delightful state of half-consciousness which precedes profound slumber, but suddenly I started up broad awake, with the echo of a cry ringing in my ears. Was I dreaming? I wondered, for I heard nothing but the sound of the waves against the boat.

Then it came again, from just beneath me, a sobbing, frightened cry, infinitely distressing to hear, and instinctively I turned on the light and jumped to the floor.

Mrs. Graham sat upright in her berth, her dark eyes looking blankly into space, and her hands tightly clasped.

"Not again, Harry," she moaned; "not again—*so soon*."

I took her hands in mine and spoke to her, calling her by name several times, and gradually the blank look in her eyes was replaced by utter bewilderment as she began to realize her surroundings.

"What is it?" she said. "What have I been doing?"

"You were dreaming," I suggested. "A bad dream, perhaps."

"A bad dream," she repeated; "yes, that's it—a bad dream. And only a dream, thank God!"

"But I've wakened you," she continued contritely, "and of course you are tired, too. I'm so sorry. Please go to sleep again, and I will try not to disturb you. I am all right indeed."

I put out the light and got back into my berth and lay there thinking about my companion and more than half expecting her to cry out again. Evidently she did not at once go to sleep, for I heard her sigh softly now and then, and once she whispered brokenly: "Only a dream, thank God, *only a dream!*"

II.

WHEN I wakened the next morning I was alone, and should have been inclined to believe the preceding night a dream were it not for the pencilled words on a scrap of paper pinned to my counterpane, that thanked me for sharing my room and expressed the hope that we might meet again in the future.

It was raining when we landed, and upon reaching our hotel, after two hours' run by train and a half-hour spent in crossing troubled waters in an odious little steamer, we were not in a condition to be enthusiastic about our new quarters.

Elizabeth's booklet had said:

This well appointed house combines the comforts of home with the conveniences of the best hotels. The cozy bedrooms, spacious verandas, abundant, carefully prepared food, and cheerful, willing service appeal at once to the jaded traveller, offering all essential bodily comforts and refreshment; while nature's never ending panorama stretching away into space affords vistas pleasing to the eye, and the society of other cultured guests provides the mental stimulus so necessary for true recreation.

Even now, however, I hesitate to recall our first week in this ideal retreat, when it rained without ceasing and the beauties of nature were left to the imagination, while the house itself proved a delusion and a snare.

Elizabeth got along best, for she immediately inspected her wardrobe and ripped up two skirts and a shirt-waist preparatory to making them over with circles of lace insertion let in by hand; her ardor was a little dampened when she discovered she had no lace and nowhere to buy it, but she rallied bravely and resorted to fagotting instead, with very satisfactory results.

Gabrielle and I were not so fortunate, for experience had taught us not to attempt to improve on our raiment, and after we had written to everybody we knew and told them what a delightful summer we anticipated, we had reached the end of our resources, and I only stared absently out of the window, while Gabrielle took to reviewing her past life, which is proof positive that she is very blue indeed.

"What use have I been in the world?" she demanded, lying face downward on her bed. "I do nothing but eat and sleep and enjoy myself, year after year."

"You are lots of use to me," interrupted Elizabeth cheerfully. "Would you cut these sleeves elbow length?"

"No, I would n't; I don't like them."

"Well, I *do*;" and Elizabeth clashed her scissors vigorously (elbow sleeves being a point upon which they differed emphatically), while Gabrielle pulled a pillow under her head and continued solemnly:

"I have quite decided that next winter shall be different. When we go back to Washington I intend to read something improving every day, and to spend the money I generally waste on theatres in flowers for the Children's Hospital; and I will read to the blind, and take them up and down to the Congressional Library to those entertainments, you know."

We exchanged smiles over her unconscious head, for the blind had often before been promised the pleasure of her society without reaping any actual benefit therefrom, and reference to them always indicated that her spirits had reached the zero point.

"Let us go out," I suggested, feeling that something must be done

to cause a diversion; "even if we get wet, it will be better than staying here."

So we donned our rain-coats and walked through the little village, with its modest frame dwellings and occasional pretentious hotel, up a hill and straight out on a bluff overlooking the sea. And there, isolated and alone, was a vacant cottage with a covered veranda.

I shall never forget our first sight of the ocean—all gray like the enveloping fog, except where the white-crested waves rolled highest, with wonderful green shadows and opalescent lights. As we looked, the mist lifted, the sun came out, and we saw the vast Atlantic stretching sparkling away into space, restless, awesome, and irresistibly alluring, with its vague suggestion of hidden marvels just beyond the horizon.

Elizabeth beckoned from the turn of the veranda, which ran quite about the house, and we joined her, speechless with admiration. Evidently the island ended here in a sharp point, for while on one hand was the ocean, on the other was water also, but closely dotted with little green islands, gay with flowers and comfortable looking houses. Just beyond was the strip of land we knew to be the border of the United States.

High above, upon the bluff, stood the little cottage, commanding an unobstructed view on every side. There was an air of coziness about it, deserted though it was, which made us homesick in spite of ourselves. It was built of shingle, now beautifully gray and weather-beaten, and had fascinating latticed windows and overhanging gables, with an outside chimney of rough stone. Anything more unlike the clapboard houses of the village could not be imagined.

"How I *would* like to get inside!" exclaimed Elizabeth longingly.

"There ain't no reason you can't," said a gruff voice behind us. I almost lost my balance, I was so startled, but turned to meet the intruder.

He seemed entirely harmless, merely an old man with a door-key, who explained that he was the caretaker and came up after each rain to be sure everything was all right; so we followed him eagerly.

If the outside of the cottage was attractive, the inside was irresistible. It consisted of a moderately large living-room with a stone fireplace, a small dining-room, smaller kitchen, three bedrooms, a bath, and a little square entrance hall.

It was furnished, too. As Gabrielle said, modestly, it could not have been done better had we attended to it ourselves. There were large, comfortable wicker chairs and couches, upholstered in chintz, chintz hangings, delightful little tables, and, last but not least, a generous supply of the necessities of life in the shape of bed and table linen, cooking utensils, table appointments of china and plated ware, and, in short, everything one could desire.

"Oh!" exclaimed Elizabeth, after exhausting her supply of adjectives, "how I should like to spend the summer right here!"

"Well," returned the caretaker, "the house is to let."

It was the beginning of the end. We all knew it privately, although we did no more than casually ascertain the rent; but Elizabeth conversed aside with the old man, while Gabrielle tried each chair in turn, and I discovered a light arranged over the couch where one might lie and read luxuriously on stormy evenings.

"Of course," said Gabrielle, as we turned reluctantly away, "it is out of the question for us to take it."

"Of course," we echoed; but Elizabeth added that the rent was ridiculously low, and I referred to the view from the window and the utter absence of vines or any sort of verdure, so necessary to combatting hay-fever.

We wanted to go back along the shore as far as possible, so descended a very steep little flight of steps leading down to a small shed or boat-house, evidently belonging to the cottage.

A woman stood on the little slip, looking out over the water. She turned as we approached, and I recognized Mrs. Graham. The keen air had brought a little color into her face, but her lips looked blue and pinched, and her voice, as she responded to my surprised greeting, shook uncontrollably.

"I am waiting for my husband," she said. "He went out early this morning in his boat, and has not yet returned. Our cottage is just beyond the bluff, but I had no idea we were your neighbors."

I explained that we were at the hotel, and expressed the hope that she felt rested after her journey, but she had resumed her scrutiny of the ocean and did not reply to my inquiry.

"He was to have been home by noon," she said, "and I have been standing here two hours. Sail-boats are treacherous, and Harry is so reckless. Ah!"

The ejaculation was one of relief, as a white sail appeared and headed for the slip.

"I'm coming to see you," I called, as we walked on, but the conclusion was forced upon me that she had forgotten my existence.

"Why do you suppose they use that forlorn little slip," I inquired, "when there are plenty of good landing-places further on?"

But the subject did not seem to interest Elizabeth, whom I had addressed, for she merely remarked with a sigh:

"I just hate to go back to that old hotel."

"But of course we could never rent the cottage," said Gabrielle the prudent.

"Oh, of course not!" we agreed, and ascended the steps of the hotel in gloomy silence.

In the hall there were mountains of trunks, covered with a bewildering quantity of labels, and a subdued air of excitement prevailed, indicating that the new arrivals were worthy of consideration. As soon as possible, we investigated the register, and found that Lord Wilfrid and Lady Edith Campbell, of London, England, were enjoying the hospitality of the house.

It was no use pretending that we were not impressed, for we *were*, and we read the names over several times aloud to see how they sounded. It was our first encounter with British aristocracy outside of books, and we hurried up-stairs to make fresh toilets in their honor.

They did not appear until we had nearly finished dinner, and we were so interested watching for them that we forgot to complain about the food.

Lord Wilfrid was disappointing, although he had the drooping blonde mustache and bored manner we were familiar with on the stage. I say this frankly because we learned later that we had been unjust and that his unprepossessing appearance was simply the result of unrequited affection, which of course went very hard with one who was accustomed to having the world at his feet—especially the feminine world.

Lady Edith told us all about it after we got to know her very well, and explained that they had come to this quiet retreat, where they were sure to meet no one, to allow her brother to regain his usual poise before visiting their uncle, the Governor General of Canada. She added that the length of their stay depended upon the benefit he derived from it, and hoped we would do what we could toward diverting him. We said we would.

Of course all this happened quite naturally as time went on, and I only mention it here to show how wrong it is to judge by appearances, for we thought Lord Wilfrid looked ill-natured and grumpy, whereas he was really suffering from a broken heart.

His sister, however, was all that could be desired, and suggested Lady Clara Vere de Vere in a very satisfactory manner. In fact, I heard Gabrielle murmur: "The daughter of a hundred earls," as Lady Edith swept through the doorway, and Elizabeth quoted: "The languid light of her proud eyes," when she inspected the somewhat dingy menu.

I don't think I said anything, for I was so absorbed in wondering whether the ripples of her golden hair were natural or acquired that I forgot everything else; but when we met her the next day and felt the charm of her personality I was ready to swear that everything about her was genuine.

So absorbed were we that evening in discussing the brother and sister that we almost forgot the cottage; but I saw Elizabeth busily engaged with pencil and paper as we were preparing for bed, and was not alto-

gether surprised to hear her voice from the next room after the lights were out and I was growing sleepy.

"If we got a competent woman who would do our washing," she remarked, "it would not be much more expensive than staying here. I have calculated everything."

"But we could never find such a woman," Gabrielle said, interested but incredulous.

"The old man said his sister would come," returned Elizabeth. "Of course I did not engage her, but I know where to find her."

The next day we rented the cottage, engaged the competent woman, and notified the clerk at the hotel that our rooms would be at his disposal at the end of the week.

III.

WE saw a good deal of the Campbells—or at least of Lady Edith—during the following week. She was unquestionably lovely, from the crown of her golden head to the tip of her dainty shoe, and, moreover, was endowed with that most enviable gift called personal magnetism; her smile was a caress, and the inflection of her voice implied unqualified pleasure in the society of the person whom she happened to address.

We took her to the cottage, and she went over it with genuine interest, suggesting slight rearrangement of furniture, and lingering on the veranda as though reluctant to leave.

"I quite envy you," she said, with a trace of sadness in her voice. "You will be so cozy up here, and—the hotel is horrid, is it not?"

"You must come and see us very often," said Elizabeth, and Gabrielle and I echoed the invitation eagerly.

"How good of you!" she replied. "I shall be only too glad to come. And I may bring Wilfrid sometimes? We are both rather forlorn strangers in a strange land, you know."

We hastened to say we would be delighted to see Lord Wilfrid at any time, and Elizabeth, who had volunteered to keep house, added that tea would be on tap every afternoon and guests very welcome.

So we took possession of the cottage on the bluff and settled down for a long, lazy summer.

It was nice. That first evening as we sat on the veranda after our comfortable dinner, listening to the murmur of the waves and watching the myriad of stars overhead, we spoke contemptuously of the stuffy little hotel, and pitied those confined within its walls.

Elizabeth had heard from home that day, and told us that a man her father had recently met owned an island near-by and had pledged himself to call upon us. Elizabeth's father is a general in the army, and has hosts of acquaintances, so his daughter is quite accustomed to encountering them wherever she goes.

"When do you expect the old gentleman?" inquired Gabrielle languidly.

"He is n't old at all," flashed Elizabeth—"at least, I don't think so. And, of course, he has sail-boats and things if he has a summer home on an island. He might be very useful."

"Ask him to dinner," I suggested, secure in the conviction that our "competent woman" could really cook.

"And ask Lord Wilfrid and Lady Edith the same evening," supplemented Gabrielle. "Let us impress him at once with our intimacy with the nobility."

"Have we a butler and twelve footmen, that we should give dinners?" inquired Elizabeth, with withering sarcasm. "When I entertain landed proprietors and members of the peerage I don't want to feel nervous about anything, so we won't attempt dinners while I'm housekeeper."

We did later, just the same, and our little dining-room was the scene of several merry nondescript meals, called dinner by courtesy, and thoroughly enjoyed by every one. But this is anticipating.

The next day as we were all three leaning out of the broad window of my room, in an interval of repose after unpacking and settling, we heard steps on the gravel path, and before we could withdraw our heads two men turned the corner and started for the front door. From the hand of the taller dangled Gabrielle's little black shopping-bag, and although he wore gray clothes and a straw hat instead of blue serge and a small cap we recognized the man on the steamer, and were consequently petrified with astonishment.

"Don't let them in," whispered Gabrielle, who always has her wits about her in an emergency. "Tell Mary Anne to say, 'Not at home.'"

They were directly under the window now, and we feared to move, almost to breathe, lest we attract their attention; but it was just at this crucial moment that my side-comb elected to fall out and land with considerable force upon the aforesaid straw hat. Of course its owner promptly looked up, and equally of course we precipitately retreated.

"Do you think he saw us?" gasped Elizabeth and I simultaneously as the doorbell rang; but Gabrielle had fled to the hall, where we heard her whispering hoarsely to Mary Anne over the banister.

We also heard that invaluable factotum's assurance that the ladies had just gone to the village, and a polite expression of regret, accompanied by a promise to call again.

We stole again to the window as our visitors retreated, and saw them pause, examine my side-comb, and calmly drop it in Gabrielle's bag, which had not been left with Mary Anne, as, of course, it should have been.

"At this rate, Bennett," said a laughing voice, "you'll soon be able

to open a junk-shop. But I must say, old chap, we were very neatly snubbed. Wherefore?"

"I don't know," replied Bennett, "but I mean to find out, for I'm coming again very soon. I assure you, Blake, the picture doesn't begin——"

The rest of the sentence was lost as the two men disappeared around the corner. We straightway held a council of war.

"I suppose," said Elizabeth, "he has lucid intervals and his attendant humors him, but that is no reason why we should be victimized. Let us caution Mary Anne."

So we descended in a body to the kitchen and solemnly warned Mary Anne that the day she admitted our late visitor we would immediately part company. She in turn solemnly assured us that if he crossed the threshold it would be over her dead body, so we felt somewhat comforted. Elizabeth picked up the cards and looked at them.

"Mr. John Clinton Blake," she read aloud, "and Mr. Gordon Bennett."

The card dropped from her hand, and she collapsed into the wood-box, which happened to be conveniently near.

"What's the matter now?" demanded Gabrielle, fishing her friend out of its capacious depths.

"Gordon Bennett," said Elizabeth weakly, "is the man who knows father, and who owns the island."

We stared at each other in incredulous silence, then sank down upon Mary Anne's immaculate floor and laughed until we were exhausted.

"I feel sure," said Elizabeth, when she could articulate, "that it is not the same man. This is some impostor."

"Mayhap," suggested Mary Anne, who had been an interested listener—"mayhap, miss, 'e's a smuggler."

Mary Anne had not long left the mother country, and her manipulation of the letter h was as agreeable to our American ears as Lady Edith's faultless enunciation. Just now she was regarding us in the calmly superior manner of one who possesses unimparted information.

"It's quite hawful, miss," she resumed, dropping her voice to a whisper, "and it do give a body the creeps, so it do. But they say the smuggling wot goes on 'ereabout is most hextraordinary."

"Smuggling?" repeated Gabrielle.

"Yes, miss; taking things in over the border without the duty—which I do say is a sin and a shame to 'ave to pay, so it is."

"It is perfectly right to pay it, Mary Anne. Everybody should obey the laws of a country."

So spoke the general's daughter, but she carefully avoided looking at us, for we all intended investing heavily in furs before our return and getting them in without cost.

"Yes, miss," replied Mary Anne, without enthusiasm, and Gabrielle inquired in rather a muffled voice what the miscreants smuggled.

"Oh, most hanythink that comes 'andy, miss. Fur, cloth, gloves, humbrellas, preshus jools—mostly di'monds. The feller they 're lookin' fur deals in di'monds. Quite the gentleman 'e is, too, so I 've 'eard."

Mary Anne proceeded to tell us, with much circumlocution and attention to detail, that the previous summer a famous band of smugglers had carried on successful operations under the very noses of our customs officials located in the little town just across the water, and had completely baffled said officials in their efforts to uphold law and justice.

She added that a police boat had recently been assigned to the station, which patrolled the shore with flashing searchlight, ready to pounce upon any unwary small craft lurking without lights in dark coves or inlets, and that a large reward had been offered for the capture of the chief offender.

"But, law!" finished Mary Anne exultantly, "wot good does that do when 'e can stay 'igh and dry this side the border? Wot 's 'e goin' to the States fur, I 'd like to know, when 'e can stay 'ere, Miss Elise, and waller in di'monds?"

I admitted that he would be foolish to thus tempt Providence, and Mary Anne resumed, thoughtfully pinching up the skin on her round red arms.

"But they 're lookin' fur 'im, pore feller, and the pollis is 'ungry fur the money wot 'll land 'im in jail. No common man 'e is, they say, but mayhap one of these 'ere islanders wot comes fur the summer, with their steam yachts and their fine cloes. Ah, well! Jail 's no wuss fur 'im than fur the likes o' us. And seein' that the gentleman to-day was very likely lookin' and civil spoken, but quite unbeknownst to me, I wondered—beggin' your parding, Miss Elizabeth—if it was 'im I 'ear so much talk about in the village. Will you be havin' clear soup ag'in to-night, miss?"

"As you please, Mary Anne;" Elizabeth spoke absently, and joined us in the living-room with an air of suppressed excitement.

"Do you think it 's possible?" she inquired, laying Mr. Gordon Bennett's card on the table as though fearing it might explode.

"No, I don't," said Gabrielle bluntly. "It 's just servants' gossip. Don't think about it any more."

Of course after that we talked of nothing else, and when Lord Wilfrid and Lady Edith came up that evening we told them all about it, beginning with our experience on the steamer. Lord Wilfrid disposed of the steamer episode in one succinct word.

"Drunk," he said, with a shrug of his shoulders, and really it seemed not improbable, now that it was suggested to us.

Lord Wilfrid appeared in a new light that evening, he was so talkative and agreeable; he also corroborated Mary Anne's story about the smugglers, and gave us a good deal of information on the subject. The village was quite excited, he said, and the fishermen who hired sailboats could talk of nothing else.

"I confess," he said, with his slow drawl, "my sympathies are with the poor devil of a smuggler. He must be a clever chap, I fancy, to be worth such a large reward."

"According to Mary Anne, he can 'waller in diamonds,'" remarked Gabrielle, laughing.

"Ah, indeed!" said Lord Wilfrid languidly. "Opulent but uncomfortable, I should imagine. Well, I wish him luck; may he——"

"Wilfrid *dear*," interrupted his sister, in laughing expostulation, "and you a magistrate at home!"

"Well, suppose I am," returned Lord Wilfrid; "it is my misfortune, not my fault. And I'm sure my sympathies are nearly always with those wretched poachers we condemn so glibly."

I instantly conceived a warmer liking for Lord Wilfrid, for I thought such sentiments worthy of admiration, and I could see that Gabrielle and Elizabeth were likewise impressed. Indeed, now that he had cast aside his mantle of sulky silence, he proved himself very pleasant indeed, and even suggested sailing parties and various other ways of passing the time.

"For," he remarked, "I think this is as good a place as anywhere to stop and breathe a bit, and it's so jolly well isolated, don't you know, that one is moderately safe from one's dear five hundred friends; so I fancy it will be quite a while before we move on—provided Edith can tolerate her accommodations."

I thought I saw a shadow cross his sister's face, but she answered him gently that where he was happy she was also, so he turned to Gabrielle and told her he had hired a boat by the week and was ready to take us out at any time.

"We have a boat-house but no boat," remarked Gabrielle, "and we can't get inside it because Mary Anne's brother inconsiderately lost the key."

"Perhaps one of mine will fit," suggested Lord Wilfrid, producing his key-ring. "Let us try and see."

So we all went down the steep flight of steps leading to the little boat-house beneath the bluff, and waited on the slip while he tried the various keys with no success.

"We are right under the cottage," said Elizabeth, "and yet one can hardly see it. I don't believe I like it down here—it is so dark and creepy. Suppose we go back."

The water washed against the slip with a sullen sound, and it was

undoubtedly very dark—so dark we could hardly distinguish one from another. Suddenly, however, a beam of light illuminated the little dock, so dazzling in its brilliancy that we were completely blinded and stood blinking helplessly.

"It's a searchlight," I said, with great originality, and added by way of encouragement: "It will be gone in an instant."

But it was n't. I don't know how long we stood motionless in the white light, but it seemed an eternity to me, and Gabrielle said afterward that she felt perfectly transparent and as though her every thought was blazoned abroad for the world to read.

Lord Wilfrid leaned against the door of the boat-house, shading his eyes with his hand. Elizabeth, who stood beside him, said he swore softly under his breath. For my part, I did not blame him, for certainly it was most unpleasant; but so also was the intense darkness into which we were plunged by the unexpected removal of the light, and with one accord we made for the steps leading back to the cottage.

It was then that Elizabeth lost her nerve and gave a stifled scream. This is liable to happen at exciting moments—when she encounters a mouse or a spider, for instance; but that night, when we were talking it over in my room, she told us she could not understand why she did it just then, but she all at once felt very queer and oppressed, and relief of some sort was necessary. So she screamed in a suppressed, choking way quite heartrending to hear, and instantly the searchlight was back again, laying bare our very souls and prying into every nook and corner of the slip and the steps leading down to it. This time we did not stand petrified, but scurried up the steps as fast as possible, and the light obligingly followed us, marking a white pathway all the way back to the cottage.

Gabrielle gave a vexed little laugh as we regained the veranda; she dislikes to show the white feather at any time, but especially at a false alarm.

"One would think we had never seen a searchlight before," she said, as Lord Wilfrid drew a chair forward and she sat down.

"Look!" she continued. "There is our enemy, I think."

We looked in the direction she pointed, and saw what appeared to be a very small tug-boat about to vanish around the point of the island.

"Perhaps," I suggested, "it is the boat looking for smugglers, and they suspected us. Would n't that be exciting?"

"No," said Elizabeth, with a little shiver; "it would be horrid. I should not like it a bit."

"Why," said Lady Edith cheerfully, "this poor child is quite white and shaking, and there was nothing to be afraid of, after all. Let us go indoors. I think I would like the lamplight myself."

So we went inside, lighted the lamp with its red shade, and grew

quite cheerful and happy again, while Lord Wilfrid told us about big game hunting in Africa, and our other guest and Elizabeth held a low-voiced conversation concerning hand-made lingerie and other subjects of mutual interest.

It seemed to me Lady Edith was tired to-night, for she was paler than usual, and sometimes her head drooped a little wearily, as though its weight of hair was burdensome. Her lips smiled readily, however, and I got so absorbed watching her dimples come and go I entirely forgot to show any interest in the pursuit of big game, which, as Gabrielle said afterward, was certainly rude on my part, for Lord Wilfrid was doing his best to be entertaining.

When at last they rose to go, and had even started down the steps of the veranda, Lady Edith turned and came back alone, laying her slender white hand on mine and slipping her other arm around Elizabeth's waist.

"I hope you will pardon me," she said gently; "I do not mean to be officious, and of course at home we looked at such things differently——"

She paused as though she found expression difficult, and then continued with some hesitation:

"But you are just three girls living here alone, and I've been thinking about what you told us to-night, and it has made me a little uncomfortable. It is so easy to be imposed upon that were I in your place I would be very cautious about admitting promiscuous young men. Now, please don't misunderstand me, will you?"

She looked anxiously into our eyes as she spoke, and as we involuntarily smiled in response she kissed us and rejoined her brother without another word. It was her first advance beyond the ordinary courtesies of mere acquaintanceship, and we were gratified as well as surprised, for with all her grace of manner she had an air of reserve difficult to penetrate, even had we been bold enough to attempt it.

Her words carried weight, too, for when Mr. Gordon Bennett repeated his call within the week he was informed that the ladies begged to be excused, and Elizabeth wrote home that she did not like things she had heard about him, and did not think she cared to know him at all.

We sat for a long time that night by the open window in my room, watching the brightly lighted boats threading their way among the islands, for Elizabeth said the ocean seemed so wide and lonely out of their own window she did not care to look at it.

"And," she continued, pushing the sleeve of her blue kimono away from her arm, "as for that boat-house, I will never go there again after dark. I had the queerest feeling!"

"Ghosts," suggested Gabrielle, "or perhaps rats. They would have the same effect on you, would n't they?"

"Well, you may laugh," said Elizabeth solemnly, "and I know I acted like a fool, but I was just sure some one was there—or *something*. I felt as though some one besides ourselves was *breathing*. Oh, I can't explain it at all, but I was next to the boat-house, and something moved inside. Maybe it was a rat, but anyhow I don't go down there any more after dark; for while I might be able to cope with men, provided I had on my best clothes and my most engaging expression, rats and mice and spiders are too much for me, and I don't care who knows it."

IV.

A few days later I paid a visit to Mrs. Graham. We could see her cottage from the path which led to the village, and every time I passed it I had an uncomfortable feeling that she was lonely and perhaps ill, and that I ought to be neighborly. So at last I went.

It was a most unprepossessing little clapboard house, evidently built for the sole purpose of affording a shelter, for certainly no time or thought had been wasted on verandas or other unnecessary, though agreeable, accessories. As I stood on the narrow front steps, waiting for my knock to be answered, I shivered instinctively and wondered if, after all, her summer would prove very beneficial.

Mrs. Graham herself opened the door, with an exclamation of pleasure.

"This is very nice," she said, "and you are especially welcome this morning, for sometimes one's thoughts are but indifferent society, are they not?"

"Well," I remarked, as I seated myself on the chair she indicated, "so we are really neighbors, after all! Are you settled yet, and do you like your new home? We are quite in love with ours."

"Settled!" she said, with a slight shrug. "Well, yes, I suppose so. But don't call it home, please—four bare walls, two windows, and a door. Is that home?"

"But," I suggested, "why not look through the window at the ocean?"

"Ah, the ocean!" she interrupted. "How I hate it! Always rolling, always changing; so deceitful, with its treacherous laughing water, and so cruel. I dislike salt air anywhere, and this seems to me the most obnoxious I ever breathed. I do not see how I am going to live through this summer."

I listened in silent astonishment, and Mrs. Graham paused with a short laugh.

"Pray excuse me," she said; "you see, I'm from the South, and I love the warmth, the flowers, and the many, many trees. My child is there, too. You could not expect me to leave him in Virginia and be happy in Canada, could you?"

"Why not bring him to Canada also?"

"Oh, no, no!" she said, with unnecessary vehemence. "He is better there—far better. See, this is his picture. Do you wonder I am rebellious at the separation? My mother writes that he is quite well and happy, and no longer frets for me. Think of that! He is already learning to do without me."

"He is like his father," I said, studying the laughing little face.

"Very like," she replied; "very, very like. Do you think," she continued slowly, "that the rearing of a child determines its after-life? I mean, do you believe in environment or heredity?"

I looked from the picture in my hand to the tense face of the mother, puzzled how to reply.

"I do not know," I faltered. "You see, I have never thought about it."

"Of course you have not!" she exclaimed. "Why should you? And how silly in me to get started on my hobby so soon! I am apt to think every one is as much interested in children as I am, but I suppose that is the way with all mothers. A childless woman loses both the greatest pleasure and the greatest pain in life, and I do not know whether to pity or envy her."

There was a movement in the room above, and she held out her hand for the picture.

"I will put it away," she said hurriedly; "and let us talk of something else. Mr. Graham thinks I allow the boy to absorb me to the exclusion of everything else, and perhaps he is right."

Mr. Graham was coming down-stairs now. I listened to the descent of his slippered feet, and speculated idly whether he breakfasted every morning at eleven. He was evidently surprised to see me, and, I thought, not over-pleased, although there was no lack of cordiality in his greeting.

"So you caught me napping!" he remarked. "The fact is, I'm a lazy sinner at the best of times—eh, Juliet? I'm extra late to-day, though, but as I only eat a bit of fruit with my roll and coffee, Mrs. Graham says it is no matter if our slavey does growl."

"You don't look as though you lived on rolls and coffee," I remarked, by way of keeping up the conversation.

"Oh, I make it up at lunch and dinner, I assure you. Is n't this a jolly little box?"

He gazed about the bare room with as much pleasure as though it contained the luxuries of a palace, and continued cheerfully:

"Just look out of the window—how's *that* for a view? And then the air we breathe night and day! Pure ozone—none of your strained, adulterated products, I can tell you! Already Mrs. Graham is like a different creature."

I glanced curiously at Mrs. Graham, but she refused to meet my eye.

"I have just been saying, Harry," she remarked, "how different this air is from the South, and how invigorating I find it."

I smothered a surprised ejaculation, and rose to go. Surely my new friend was rather bewildering.

"Oh, I say," exclaimed Mr. Graham, "just wait a moment till I drink my coffee, and I'll walk along with you. I'm going to the village for the mail."

As the post-office was my ultimate destination also, I resumed my chair, and Mrs. Graham and I carried on a desultory conversation until he returned, hat in hand, and announced himself ready.

"You will come and see me often, will you not?" she said, holding my hand for a moment. "And you will not mind if I do not always return your visits? I do not go out very much."

"Nonsense!" returned her husband. "Rousing is just what you need. She should n't be such a recluse, should she?"

He put the question in a laughing voice, but it was evident he was really annoyed, so I started for the door, fearing I might unwittingly introduce another unwelcome subject if I lingered any longer.

I glanced furtively at Mr. Graham as we walked along, and more than once found him inspecting me in like manner. The third time I caught his eye he laughed good-naturedly.

"Both taking stock," he remarked, with calm nonchalance, "and both caught in the act. Well, do I pass muster?"

"I hope I have not been rude," I returned, a little vexed at his tone of easy familiarity; but he only laughed again, and began to talk about the climate and the country, showing a knowledge of the coast which surprised me.

"Surely," I exclaimed, "you have not learned all this since you have been here?"

"Oh, no," he returned; "I'm an old stager. The fact is, I spent several summers here when I was a young chap, and I'm very keen about it indeed. The sea regularly calls to me, and I'm never quite happy away from it."

"And Mrs. Graham?"

"Well, she don't know much about it as yet, but she's learning. I can't induce her to get into a boat, though—more's the pity."

"You are fond of sailing?"

"Very fond. When I get out in my catboat, I have no idea of the flight of time."

I had a sudden vision of his wife's figure waiting on the little dock. Doubtless she was destined to pass many anxious, expectant hours before the end of the summer.

Mr. Graham put our letters in his pocket with his own, for safe-keeping, and we turned our faces homeward.

On the outskirts of the village we met Lady Edith Campbell, sauntering along under her white parasol, the personification of dainty womanhood. She stopped to speak to me, and I was about to introduce my companion when, to my surprise, she held out her hand cordially.

"Why, Mr. Graham!" she exclaimed. "What are you doing in this remote corner of the world, and do you mean to cut your old friends?"

"I was so astonished, Lady Edith, that I doubted the evidence of my eyes. What brings you here, may I ask?"

"Wilfrid and I are touring for his health. Is Mrs. Graham with you? How very charming! We all crossed from England together this spring," she explained for my benefit, "and we got to know each other very well, as people do on shipboard. Where is Mrs. Graham, and may I not go and see her this morning?"

Mr. Graham hesitated perceptibly, but I settled the question by holding out my hands for the letters and announcing that I meant to take a short cut to the cottage, and would see them again soon.

As usual, the girls were on the veranda, and I dropped the mail in Elizabeth's lap and flung myself exhaustedly into the hammock.

"I don't like paying visits," I remarked, "and I just hate taking walks with other people's husbands."

"Oh, I don't know," replied Gabrielle. "I rather like married men—they are so *safe*. They never suspect you of designs on them if you are pleasant, you know, and——"

"Why," interrupted Elizabeth, who had been turning over the mail, "what's this? What have you been buying, Elise? I'm going to look at it."

She held in her hand a small tissue-paper package about the size of an ordinary note envelope, and before I could disclaim any responsibility for it she had opened it and was examining the contents.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, "look at this."

And, nothing loath, we joined her on the steps and looked also. The little package contained a small piece of blue ribbon, and carefully fastened to it was a ring of yellow hair. Such pretty hair it was, too! It might have come from the head of a little child, it was so soft and curled so daintily. In the sunshine it glittered like spun gold.

Elizabeth put her finger under the shining ringlet and looked at me doubtfully.

"Where did you get it," she inquired, "and what are you going to do with it?"

"I never saw it before," I replied, thoroughly puzzled.

Gabrielle lifted the ribbon, which was attached at the top to a

piece of white note-paper, evidently for the purpose of holding it straight.

"There is writing on it," she announced, and we literally put our heads together to decipher the words closely written in pencil.

"*'I need you,'*" read Elizabeth. "*'Do not delay.'*"

"There is more," I continued; "listen.

"And another voice is calling,
Oh, it cometh from the sea,
With an undertone of danger—
But there's work for you and me."

"What does it mean?" questioned Gabrielle. "Elise, you brought it here; you *must* know."

"Indeed I don't! I got the mail and——"

I paused as a sudden light dawned upon me.

"It's *his*," I exclaimed lucidly; and went on to explain that Mr. Graham had given me our mail very hurriedly, as Lady Edith was waiting for him, and doubtless the little package had slipped in between two letters.

Elizabeth was folding the tissue-paper carefully about the piece of ribbon.

"It is his, of course," she said, "and we must return it. But, oh dear! how I wish I had not opened it!"

"What I want to know," remarked Gabrielle, who was of a very inquiring disposition, "is this: why does Mr. Graham carry a piece of yellow hair around in his pocket, when his wife's hair is almost black?"

"I wish I had not opened it," repeated Elizabeth, who was really troubled. "How shall I ever explain doing it? And to whom shall we return it?"

We discussed the question long and anxiously, and finally determined to enclose the package in an envelope addressed to Mr. Graham, and send it to the cottage by Mary Anne, with a verbal message that he had given it to us by mistake.

"And," concluded Gabrielle, "we won't ask any questions as to whose hands it falls into, although I *should* like to know all about it."

V.

AFTER all, it was Gabrielle who first opened the door in our wall of reserve and allowed Gordon Bennett to penetrate beyond it, and in the light of after events I was very glad, indeed, I was not responsible. It happened this way.

She had washed her hair and gone out in the sun to dry it, taking a book and a box of chocolates to help pass away the time, and, after

wandering about a little, had established herself at the top of the flight of steps leading down to the boat-house, as the most secluded as well as the sunniest place she could find.

Gabrielle's hair is reddish brown, and when the sun shines upon it there are gold threads which glitter exceedingly, so we tell her she makes a point of going out of doors to dry it; but she says this is a slander, and she does it because fresh air and sunshine are good for the scalp. Anyhow, she went. And she also borrowed Elizabeth's ivory comb with the silver back, because its teeth are very wide apart, and therefore acceptable when it comes to getting out the tangles. Now, this especial comb is solely for ornament, and lies in state upon Elizabeth's dressing-table, with the brush beside it; they belong to a set brought her from Japan, and have associations which render them sacred, so I was astonished at Gabrielle's vandalism in proposing to desecrate it.

Just what really happened I don't know; I believe she got to dreaming out there in the sunshine, but this is what she said:

"I was sitting quietly reading when I heard a little thump, and there was that miserable comb balancing on the bottom step. Of course I went after it, and of course before I got there it toppled over and went through a crack of the slip into the water."

"That slip is hoodooed," interrupted Elizabeth. "Why don't you do as I do, and keep away from it?"

"It was low tide," continued Gabrielle, "and I could look through the crack and see it lying on the sand beneath the water, so I took a stick and tried to poke it out. I got along very well by progressing from crack to crack, but at the critical moment I got excited and poked too hard, and it shot out just beyond my reach. That made me wild, for I knew I could n't face Elizabeth without it, so I simply lay down and grappled with my stick."

"Well," I inquired, as she paused with a reminiscent chuckle.

"Well, as I was lying there with my face the color of a boiled lobster, fishing away for all I was worth, I heard a voice say: 'Allow me,' and there he was in a sail-boat, the picture of coolness and comfort. He rolled up his sleeve, though, and went to work, and finally got it, then calmly landed and introduced himself, saying something about having been unfortunate in his visits."

"Then was your opportunity to be dignified and squelching," I interrupted. "You should have frozen him with a glance."

"I tried to," she returned, "but all at once I remembered my hair, and who could be dignified then?"

"So you brought him home with you as a reward of merit," laughed Elizabeth. "I shall never forget how you looked as you came up the veranda steps."

"Yes," said Gabrielle; "and you two sat and stared as though we had escaped from the zoo. Take your comb, Elizabeth; I never borrowed one before, and I never will again."

"I suppose," remarked Elizabeth, reflectively examining her recovered property, "we may be said to have *dropped* into his life: first your bag, then Elise's side-comb, and now this of mine. It's fate—we've got to know him, but it was n't so bad, after all, was it?"

Indeed, we had all enjoyed the afternoon. Even Gabrielle returned to the veranda, with her hair as high up on her head as she could get it and with her most impressive manner, but we none of us referred to our trip up on the steamer, and our visitor departed without once mentioning our property in his possession, although my side-combs were obviously not mates, which made me very uncomfortable.

Elizabeth asked him to come again, and when reproached for her cordiality said she did it only to please us, and quite expected to be bored to death herself; from which we knew she was very favorably impressed.

A sudden storm came up that afternoon, and when Mr. Bennett rose to go the sky was very black and lowering, and the ocean roared ominously, so he left his boat tied to our slip and went up into the village to do some errands and wait until it should be over. Instead of a short squall, however, it settled down into a heavy rain, with howling easterly wind and tossing, turbulent sea, so he was obliged to spend the night in the village, as, of course, he could not cross to his island in his small boat.

It was our first real storm in the cottage, and as we heard the boom of the waves and listened to the wind sweep about our little home until it sometimes trembled upon its foundations, I must admit we were slightly nervous and could not settle to any occupation. So we gathered around our stone fireplace, lighted the driftwood Mary Anne had placed ready, and watched the wonderful green, lavender, scarlet, and blue of the crackling flames in silence.

Elizabeth sat on the rug and leaned her head against Gabrielle's knee, and their faces gradually assumed the dreamy, far-away expression which means they have withdrawn into their own inner world, where outsiders may not follow them, and where memory and anticipation are softened by mutual interest and mutual affection. But I did not care, for I also had a little inner world with memories, and liked to anticipate the future, now very hazy and indistinct, to be sure, but filled with delightful possibilities and alluring in its very vagueness.

So I leaned back in my low wicker chair and built castles in the air, while the rain beat unnoticed against the windows and the surf thundered angrily upon the shore.

"What's that?" cried Elizabeth sharply, and with one accord we sprang to our feet.

For above the noise of the storm we had heard a crash, as of metal striking metal, and the fall of a heavy body, apparently right beneath us.

"It's the storm," said Gabrielle. "Only the storm."

But she was white and trembling as she spoke, and cast an apprehensive glance at the floor, as though she expected it to open and engulf us.

"The cellar," whispered Elizabeth—"some one is down there."

Now, the cellar was a part of our abode we had not yet explored, so it had all the mystery of the unknown, and as we crept stealthily into the kitchen we experienced a sensation of standing over a bomb which might at any time explode and annihilate us. Gabrielle valiantly advanced to the door leading down into it, and opened it the fraction of an inch.

"Who is there?" she said, beginning bravely enough and ending with a quavering whisper.

Of course there was no reply, and we would have been frightened to death if there had been, yet we felt indignant at the stillness, as well as at the impenetrable darkness our eyes could not pierce. Gabrielle shut and locked the door.

"Shall we go down?" Her voice was rather tremulous, and she looked relieved when we shook our heads decidedly.

"If we only had a dog," I hazarded, "we could put it down ahead of us and find out if any one was there; but we *have n't*."

"No," agreed Elizabeth thoughtfully; "but we have Mary Anne."

As though in response to her name, the outer kitchen door opened, and Mary Anne herself, wet, draggled, and breathless, stood before us.

Her usually ruddy face was pale, and her eyes rolled wildly as she looked from one to the other, while her shawl slipped unnoticed to the floor, and we saw that her gown was badly torn and her arm scratched and bleeding.

"You've been out?"

It was Elizabeth who spoke, and her voice brought Mary Anne's wandering eye to a focus and held it a moment.

"Yes, miss."

She picked up her shawl and folded it carefully, smoothing the creases with trembling hands.

"It's a wild night, Miss Elizabeth," she said, with a shudder. "The storm got into me blood, miss, and sleep I could n't fur thinking of them I knows who are maybe out on the sea, so I got me shawl and started fur me brother's 'ouse to see if 'e 'ad got 'ome safe and sound; but I could n't git down the bluff, Miss Elise, the wind being that vi'lent

it clean druv me back. And I stumbled, Miss Gabrielle, and 'urt meself ag'inst the side of the 'ouse, miss, as you kin see fur yerself. 'Ow, but it's a night! God save them out on the wide water."

Mary Anne paused for breath and looked curiously at us.

"But what are ye all in the kitchen fur?" she inquired in a more natural way. "Is it afraid ye are, too, and come out 'ere to look fur me to keep ye comp'ny?"

We told her about our fright, and she promptly reassured us, saying she had locked everything securely early in the evening, but would go down and investigate.

"I'll go with you and hold the light," I volunteered; but Mary Anne declined my society more firmly than politely.

"And what good would you be, Miss Elise—jumpin' at yer shadder and drippin' candle grease over me clean floor? No, thank ye kindly, I'll go alone; fur well I know there's nothin' bigger than a rat down there."

It was very pleasant to hear her moving about, and when she called up to us with a laugh that the hanging shelf had fallen, coming down upon the coal shovel and scuttle, we laughed also, and felt a weight lifted from our hearts.

"Them ropes was rotten," announced Mary Anne, laboriously ascending the stairs, "and it's a mercy I did n't set the cream there to raise as usual—which, praise be given, I did n't. Don't you worry no more, but go to bed, and I'll make some chocolate to warm you like, for it's very comfortin' to the innerds on a night like this."

It was acceptable advice, and we gladly followed it, but as we left the kitchen I chanced to glance back and saw Mary Anne at the cellar door, her head bent and her whole bearing tense and alert—much the attitude of a dog who waits an expected command in its master's voice.

Yet when she appeared up-stairs a little later, carrying a tray with three cups of steaming chocolate, and filled with motherly solicitude as to our comfort, she was merely a respectable, middle-aged servant, whose opinions one would receive with due respect. She had rearranged her dress, and her manner was quite natural and composed as she drew aside the curtain and looked into the night, with a comment on its wildness.

We joined her at the window, and as we stood looking out a beam of light pierced the enveloping darkness, casting a broad path across the black water, and we could see a little boat making its way around the point of the island—now riding the waves gallantly, now tipped so far to one side it seemed certain to capsize.

"Our friend the searchlight," remarked Gabrielle, in the tone of one who welcomes an old acquaintance, but a smothered sound as the

little boat careened dangerously caused me to glance curiously at Mary Anne.

She was leaning against the window frame, and was evidently in pain, for her face was livid and her breath came in short gasps.

"It's nothing, Miss Elise," she muttered, as she caught my eye. "The dyspepsy ketches me around the 'eart now and then. And to think of some mother's son in that little cockle-shell to-night! Come, now, get into bed and drink yer chocolate while it's 'ot."

"I think," remarked Elizabeth, as she sipped appreciatively, "that Mr. Bennett's boat will be beaten to pieces against our slip to-night. I wish we could get into the boat-house for such emergencies. You must make your brother get us a key, Mary Anne."

"Yes, miss," said Mary Anne quietly.

I tried to say something, but found myself suddenly too sleepy to articulate, and saw Mary Anne retreat with the empty cups as though through a veil.

I slept heavily that night, and dreamed that Gordon Bennett made a boat-house of our cellar in spite of our remonstrances to the contrary. I also had a curiously vivid impression of Mary Anne and a candle passing and repassing my door, but when I tried to call out and ask her what she wanted I could make no sound, and could only struggle with the oppressed, smothering sensation which Elizabeth said always accompanied nightmare. I was willing to take her word for it, never having experienced it myself, but I did not like it, and mentally resolved to drink no more chocolate at night, if it produced such unwelcome after-effects.

VI.

It was a very beautiful world which greeted us the morning after the storm, all swept and garnished and freshly painted for our delectation.

I wish I could describe it, as we stood upon our veranda drinking in the life-giving ozone and feasting our eyes upon the landscape. Perhaps if I were an artist I could better express the bright azure of the sky, the deeper blue of the sparkling ocean rippling with white-capped waves, the wonderful clearness of the atmosphere, and the glorious sunlight gilding everything until the commonest objects were endowed with a charm hitherto unsuspected.

I had wakened tired and unrefreshed, and both Gabrielle and Elizabeth looked rather pale and heavy-eyed, so we decided to spend the day at home, and established ourselves upon the veranda for one of the long, lazy mornings in which we frequently indulged.

Lady Edith Campbell soon joined us, fresh and dainty in her pretty morning costume and simple hat, and we greeted her with enthusiasm.

"Wilfrid has gone fishing," she remarked, as she removed her hat, "and as he means to be away all day, I shall not be missed. How very cozy you all look, and what a wonderful morning, is it not?"

"If storms bring days like this," remarked Gabrielle, from the hammock, "I shall not care how often they come."

"Oh, shall you not?" replied Lady Edith, with a little shiver. "I do not believe I agree with you. Last night was terrible even in the village; what it must have been in this exposed place I cannot imagine. I am always afraid of the wind, and then, too——"

She paused uncertainly and looked at us before continuing.

"Such a dreadful thing happened! Do you care to hear hotel gossip?"

We hastened to assure her that we loved all gossip, hotel or otherwise, and she laughed a little as she resumed.

"Well, last night Mrs. Bundy, the fat old lady who had the table next to ours, you know——"

"Who wore a diamond sunburst on her forefinger and headlights in her ears," interrupted Gabrielle.

"And came to breakfast in a velvet tea-gown, with an emerald necklace," supplemented Elizabeth. "Of course we remember her. Did she die of apoplexy or anything?"

"She was robbed," said Lady Edith gravely. "All her jewels were taken, and they were very valuable. Poor old woman! Was it not dreadful? She is in a state of hysterical collapse this morning, and who can wonder?"

"Robbed!" I exclaimed incredulously.

"Yes, robbed. It makes one very uncomfortable, does it not? They say it is the work of an expert, and have put the matter into the hands of the police, hoping to recover the jewels."

"Whom do they suspect?"

"I do not know," she hesitated a moment, then resumed quietly: "You see, the hotel was crowded last night with strangers storm-bound on the island, and it will be difficult to form an opinion. Mrs. Bundy was alarmed at the storm, and spent most of the night in her daughter's room. It is probable the thief got in then, or when she was at dinner."

"But," objected Elizabeth, "it must have been some one who knew she had them. It could not have been a stranger."

"One can never tell," said Lady Edith thoughtfully. "But I confess it has made me nervous. I did not bring many jewels, fortunately, but I have my mother's pearls and a few other trinkets I would not care to lose, and I do not know what to do with them, since it appears unsafe to trust things in one's room, even if they are securely put away. Mrs. Bundy insisted that she locked up her emeralds with her own hands, and had the key on a ribbon around her neck."

"I am glad we left when we did," I remarked as she paused. "Not that I am burdened with jewels, but it must be awfully unpleasant."

"It is," she agreed; "one is inclined to look suspiciously at one's neighbors, not to mention the servants. As for me, I have put my treasures in this box and carried it with me everywhere this morning. I would not even trust my maid, who has been with me for years. I do not know what in the world to do with them, and am more than half inclined to dig a hole and bury them deep and safe."

She gave a vexed little laugh as she spoke, and raised a box wrapped in white paper which she held on her lap, and which had appeared to contain bonbons.

"I'll tell you," said Elizabeth impulsively. "Leave them here. There is a little iron safe under the china closet in the dining-room. I can't imagine why it was put there, for it is not big enough to hold much silver, even if we had anything but the most obvious plate; but it possesses two padlocks, and you could lock it and keep the keys."

"Do you really mean it?" said Lady Edith incredulously.

"Yes—why not? I'm sure we won't be pursued for our valuables, and, if you will take all responsibility for leaving them, you are more than welcome to the exclusive use of the safe—is n't she, girls?"

Of course we agreed willingly, and were quite repaid by the look of relief in her big brown eyes and the pretty, eager manner with which she endeavored to express her gratitude.

"Let us put them away at once and get them off our minds," suggested Gabrielle, springing from the hammock and leading the way to the dining-room.

So we opened the door—which looked like an ordinary wooden panel below the corner closet—and disclosed the little iron safe with its two padlocks—both so rusty from disuse that it took all the strength I possessed to turn the keys.

"There!" I remarked, handing them to Lady Edith and closing the outer wooden door. "Now you can rest in peace."

"You have removed an incubus from my shoulders," she said, with a quick display of dimples, "and I am more grateful than I can express. I should not have had an easy minute after Mrs. Bundy's experience, although I am inclined to believe it was one of the strange men who spent the night here, rather than a guest or servant of the hotel. I would *rather* think so.

"And do you know," she continued thoughtfully, "my maid says that several of these men left very early, without waiting for breakfast—as soon as it was light, in fact. That in itself seems suspicious, under the circumstances, but then, as I said, every one is inclined to suspect every one else, and it is all very horrid and uncomfortable. Now, do let us go outside again, and not waste this glorious day."

We had a delightful morning, for our guest was even more charming than usual. There was a subdued exhilaration in her manner, and an exuberance of spirit we had never seen before; her cheeks were softly pink, and her eyes shone, as she chatted merrily of various things after the fashion of girls the world over. In her softened mood, with the *grande dame* manner laid aside, she was quite irresistible, and I found myself wondering why her left hand bore neither wedding nor engagement ring, and whether she as well as her brother had an unhappy romance to be lived down and forgotten.

She did not, however, convey the impression of a lovelorn damsel, for a more radiant creature I have never seen. By the time lunch was over we felt as though we had known her always, and were planning a summer abroad, part of which was to be spent at her father's castle in Scotland.

"I hope," she added, "that Wilfrid will have quite recovered his poise before you come over, and you can see him as he really is—such a dear fellow! And then, who knows what might happen? One of you might be induced to stay in the old world, for we have many friends, and American girls are very popular, you know."

After lunch Elizabeth declared her intention of going down the cellar to see what it was like, saying that it made her very uncomfortable not to know what she lived over; but she returned immediately, with a most disgusted expression.

"Mary Anne is scrubbing," she announced, "and the whole place is as wet as the ocean. I'll have to wait until to-morrow. Just now I would need a boat."

"What's the use of bothering?" inquired Gabrielle placidly. "It would not worry me if I never explored the cellar. Just so long as I know it's there, I don't care what it looks like."

"Well, I *do*," returned Elizabeth firmly; "and I'm going down there the first thing in the morning, if I don't forget it."

"Suppose we walk down to the wharf in the village," suggested Lady Edith, "and meet Wilfred. We might induce him to take us for a sail."

But I still felt very indolent and preferred the hammock, with its many pillows and cool breeze, to the long, hot walk to the village, so the other three started cheerfully off, leaving me to my own devices.

For a while I swung idly to and fro, watching the dancing water and admiring the effect of the sunlight on the occasional sail which ventured around the point from the island colony on the other side. I was thinking in a desultory way of poor Mrs. Bundy and her lost emeralds, and of Lady Edith and her mother's pearls, and wishing she had opened the box and shown them to us before locking them away, when I heard a step upon the gravel path, and Gordon Bennett

lifted his cap and smiled amicably upon me, as though he were quite in the habit of paying us daily visits.

I noticed then what white teeth he had, and how he smiled with his eyes as well as his lips, but this is an unimportant digression.

"I apologize for coming so often," he remarked, appropriating a comfortable chair. "My excuse is that I wish to return your property. I forgot it yesterday."

He drew Gabrielle's bag from his pocket as he spoke, and regarded it affectionately.

"At least," he continued, "I suppose it belongs to one of you; I found it on the steamer coming up, you know, just where you had been sitting."

I acknowledged our ownership of the property, and extended my hand for it, but he held it thoughtfully, as though unwilling to relinquish it.

"Would you mind," he said at last, with some hesitation, "telling me why when I started to bring you this bag, that night on the steamer, you all turned and fled as though I had been a carnivorous animal?"

There was a twinkle in his eye which made me hotly resentful, although I tried to preserve a cool and indifferent manner.

"Would you really like to know?"

"Pining to be told; I have lost valuable sleep trying to work it out."

"Well, we thought you were crazy."

"Why, please?"

His voice was genuinely astonished, and I plunged at once into an explanation I hoped would be satisfactory.

"You see, it was those chairs you threw overboard. It was such an extraordinary thing to do. And Gabrielle said you muttered when you did it."

"Is that all?"—relief and amusement struggled for supremacy in his voice, and I felt myself flushing uncomfortably.

"I think it's quite enough," I returned irritably. "No men in their senses go around throwing chairs overboard."

"And is that why I got the cold shoulder when I called?"

"Of course."

Mr. Gordon Bennett laughed then as he has never dared laugh since when referring to that subject, for we don't like to talk about it, as it makes us appear rather foolish.

"I am glad it amuses you," I remarked, in my most frigid manner, which I have been told is extremely chilling.

"Oh, I say," he said quickly, "don't look at it that way. Why, it was nothing, after all. I had made two trips on that old boat this

summer, and one of those dilapidated chairs broke down with me and nearly pitched me overboard. I complained, but the company would not get new ones, which put my back up a bit, so I got into the habit of examining them, and when I found one weak in the back or legs I just pitched it overboard. That was n't so bad, was it? Of course I never thought how it looked, and I *did* 'mutter,' but I'm heartily glad you did not hear what I said."

It was a very simple explanation—so simple, in fact, that I felt provoked it had not occurred to me, and I hated to think how he would relate the incident to his friend Mr. Blake, and how they would laugh over it. So I merely looked out at the ocean and made a frosty, impersonal remark about the view.

But instead of the familiar landscape I found myself looking straight into two merry blue eyes with a trace of anxiety in them, and a sunburned hand was extended toward me appealingly.

"Let's shake and be friends," he said heartily. "I'm sorry I alarmed you, but I'm glad I found out my offense. I was determined I would know what it was. When the general wrote me his daughter was here, and I discovered who it was, I was delighted, for of course I saw you all on the boat, and I wanted awfully to know you. You don't mind my saying so? Then when I got snubbed so unmercifully I could not understand it. Shall we start all over again, and will you explain to your friends that I am in possession of all my senses and hope to keep them a while longer?"

Well, it was impossible not to smile also, and indeed I was very glad of a chance to descend gracefully from my high horse, so we shook hands gravely and started all over again, as he had suggested.

I inquired where he spent the night, and he mentioned the hotel we had deserted, so I told him about the robbery. He had heard nothing, having left very early in the morning, meaning to sail home in time for breakfast.

I asked him if his boat suffered any ill effects from the storm, and his manner grew all at once constrained and ill at ease, so I changed the subject, fearing that it might have been irrevocably damaged against our slip, and feeling somewhat responsible. I spoke of the cottage, and how we enjoyed life here, and the contrast it was to the hotel.

"Yes," he said absently; "it's a jolly little place. But, tell me, how did you hear of it, and how did you manage to get it? I understood it was not for rent."

I told him he was mistaken; that we had no trouble at all in securing it, and that the rent was ridiculously low, all things considered.

"I would like to know to whom it belongs," I remarked. "I understand it was some woman's whim, and she has tired of it. Perhaps

we might get some of our relatives to buy it and come here every summer."

"Don't you know anything about it?"—he was looking at me curiously now.

"Not a thing," I said lightly; "do you?"

A dull red flush was distinctly visible beneath his coat of tan as he replied to my question.

"I'm not a native, you know. I was here for a bit last year, and I liked it; so when I had a chance to buy an island, house and all, I jumped at it. But I'm not wise about my neighbors. I do know that this cottage was occupied last summer, and I heard the people were very unsocial and never received a guest or entered the village while they were here; and, of course, there were stories. Gossip flourishes on a mystery, you know."

"Well," I returned, "I don't care how mysterious the former tenants were, but I'm glad they did not come back. Perhaps they were in mourning, or invalids, or something of that sort."

"No doubt," he agreed hastily; "no doubt."

And then we changed the subject and talked of other things till the sound of voices and laughter told me Elizabeth and Gabrielle were returning from the village. They brought Lady Edith and Lord Wilfrid both home with them to dinner, and it was not difficult to persuade Mr. Bennett to stay also, so we had the first of some very merry repasts, where morning costumes were allowed, and where Mary Anne, to quote her own words, "dished up hanythink that came 'andy and prayed the Lord it would be enough."

That night I asked Gabrielle to look in her bag and give me my side-comb; but she found that it was not there, and that our picture also was missing.

"We will ask for it the next time we see him," remarked Elizabeth. "I don't think it is very nice in him to have taken it out."

"Oh, no," I objected; "don't say anything about it. I don't want to give him the satisfaction of knowing we missed it."

And we all agreed that this was our most dignified course.

VII.

ELIZABETH inspected the cellar next morning, and I went with her, by request.

"Not that I'm afraid," she explained elaborately; "but it is always nicer to have some one to speak to, and, besides, one of you, at least, ought to take an interest in such things."

It looked very much like other cellars, with paved floor, coal bins, and so on, except that it ran far back, forming a sort of alleyway, which

was very dark and unprepossessing and seemed to be a repository for old boxes, bits of paper, kindling wood, and the usual accumulated trash of a household. At the extreme end an empty packing case large enough to have contained a piano rested against the wall, which looked and smelled very damp and mouldy.

Elizabeth glanced about and curled her lip contemptuously; the zeal of the born housekeeper shone in her eye, and I knew she had visions of nicely whitewashed walls, with eminently proper receptacles for kindling and waste paper, and foresaw trouble ahead for Mary Anne.

We could hear the ocean outside, for of course the cellar was simply an excavation in the bluff, and altogether it conveyed such an unpleasant impression of a vault-like cave that I was not sorry when Elizabeth proposed an adjournment.

"And here is the hanging shelf," I remarked, as I almost ran into it. "Mary Anne has lost no time putting it up again—on chains this time, so I hope it is safe."

"How rusty they are!" said Elizabeth, pausing to examine them. "They look as though they had been here for years, but I suppose they are old ones she found somewhere. This place must be well aired; it is awfully musty."

She gathered up her skirts as she spoke, preparatory to going up the steps, and I was about to follow when something caught my eye, and mechanically I stooped and picked it up from a crack between two bricks.

"Have you lost anything?" called Elizabeth from the stairs.

"No," I replied; "I have found something. Look here."

Together we examined my discovery as it lay in the palm of my hand—a man's cuff link of dull, raised gold, the head of the Sphinx on one side and the under link shaped like a small key.

Elizabeth turned it over curiously.

"It must have belonged to the people who were here last year," she conjectured. "It's very pretty, isn't it? I never saw one anything like it."

"Look, Mary Anne!" I exclaimed, as we entered the kitchen. "See what I have found."

Mary Anne advanced willingly, but as I raised the button by the little key and held it toward her, her jaw dropped suddenly and the color forsook her ruddy face.

"Where'd you find it, miss?"

"In the cellar, right by the steps."

"You've—been—down in the cellar?"

"Certainly; why not?"

Mary Anne wiped her face with a corner of her gingham apron, and poked wood into the stove with reckless prodigality.

"It's entirely too fore'anded you are, Miss Elizabeth," she grumbled—"the cellar lookin' like distraction and you goin' down there the fust time! What kind of 'ousekeepin' do you think I do? This very day I laid out to put everything shipshape down there and take you around meself. And the cellar's damp-like, and no place fur a lady any'ow, and you like to take cold and sneeze yer 'ead off!"

Elizabeth laughed and assured her that this catastrophe was not liable to happen to-day, and suggested that the cellar might be improved by the introduction of fresh air and sunlight.

"And how soon you got the shelf fixed!" she added, by way of soothing Mary Anne's ruffled feelings.

"Shelf?" she repeated vaguely. "Oh, of course, miss. 'Ow could I git along without it? And what else did ye find in the cellar, Miss Elise, besides the little button?"

I thought she watched me keenly as I replied I had not looked for anything more, and wondered she had not seen it on her trips up and down the steps.

"Me eyes are not so good as they once were, nor so bright as yours, Miss Elise," she remarked. "It's a pretty thing, now, is n't it? What will you be doin' with it?"

But I did not reply, for Gabrielle, who had been to the village for the mail, now appeared, and Elizabeth immediately lost interest in everything else.

I do not wish to arouse false suspicions, but Elizabeth certainly wrote a great many very long letters, and received volumes all in the same handwriting, which always arrived on certain days of the week. She used to open them with an air of indifference and glance over them carelessly, then in a few minutes she would make some excuse to go off alone, and we could sometimes see her poring over them, dead to the world as she turned page after page, and smiling a smile which exasperated Gabrielle exceedingly, although she also did not a little corresponding on her own account that summer.

To-day, however, she handed Elizabeth her letter without comment, and only glanced casually at the cuff link when I displayed it in triumph, for she was eager to relate the news she had accumulated during her trip to the village.

"You know that smuggler?" she began, seating herself on the kitchen doorstep and removing her hat.

"No," I interrupted; "I'm happy to say I *don't* know him."

"You know *about* him, don't you? It's all the same thing. Well, I've been to the hotel, and I heard that he is suspected of having been on the island the night of the storm, and they think"—she dropped her voice cautiously—"they think he took Mrs. Bundy's emeralds."

"Who thinks so?"

"Oh, the detectives, of course. Lady Edith told me. And they say it was a very foolish thing for him to do, because he can now be arrested in Canada. And our government officials are perfectly wild, too, for a whole lot of things were smuggled in somehow right under their noses."

"Is he on the island now?"

"Oh, no. As Lord Wilfrid said, it would be madness for him to stay here now. He must have been one of the men who left the hotel so early that morning—before Mrs. Bundy discovered her loss. They are following them up, of course, but it was easy enough to register a false name and address. I can forgive his smuggling, but I can't forgive his robbing that poor old woman—she's just scared to death, and expects to have her throat cut every night, they say—so I hope they will catch him."

"Don't be 'opin' that, Miss Gabrielle;" it was Mary Anne who spoke, and she stood listening to the story with dish-cloth in one hand and plate in the other. "Don't be 'opin' that. Remember the mother what bore 'im, and them that loves 'im, be 'e what 'e may."

"Well," said Gabrielle, "his mother should have brought him up better, that's all I've got to say about it; and I *do* hope he'll be caught and punished. Give us something good for lunch, won't you, Mary Anne? I'm starving."

"And, Elise," she continued, "I made an engagement for us all to go sailing this afternoon with the Campbells. And do you know—I almost forgot to tell you—the guests at the hotel had to submit to having their trunks searched. I think it was insulting, but Lady Edith said she thought it only right."

"But, Gabrielle," said Elizabeth, tucking her letter inside her shirt-waist, to be brought forth in private later, "you forget I told Mr. Bennett he could bring his friend Mr. Blake this afternoon. I meant to have tea on the veranda."

"So you did. Well, we can all come home about four o'clock."

"And I'll be ready fur you," promised Mary Anne eagerly. "Don't you fash yerself, Miss Elizabeth; I'll have everything laid out and ready, and I'll make you some nice little cakes, too, and 'ave them 'ot and ready, fur well I know you'll all be 'ungry."

So when Lord Wilfrid sailed to our little slip that afternoon he found us waiting for him and quite prepared for a good time. There was a nice breeze, and the sea was not too rough, so we thoroughly enjoyed ourselves and made a tour among the neighboring islands, admiring the handsome residences with which they seemed to abound.

"But I would just as lieve have our cottage on the bluff as any of them," declared Elizabeth contentedly, and we all agreed with her.

We sailed so near the American shore that we could distinguish the

signs on the wharf of the little town where the boat landed, and Gabrielle proposed going ashore and looking around a little. Lord Wilfrid busied himself with his sail for a moment, then turned and looked steadily at his sister.

"Shall we land, Edith?" he said. "The wind is dead against us, and it will take some time to tack home again, but of course, if you think best, I am quite willing."

"Oh, I hardly think it would be wise, dear," she replied. "The girls have an engagement, you know. Some other time."

So we sailed home again, speculating as to which island Gordon Bennett owned, until we saw that gentleman himself embarking with his friend in an immaculate little launch, glistening with white paint and absolutely spotless in every respect. We learned later on that the islanders are quite as particular about the appearance of their boats as are the cottagers at Bar Harbor about their equipages, and that there is among them a friendly rivalry on the subject. We hailed him merrily and challenged him to race us home, and in spite of Lord Wilfrid's statement about the wind the boat cut through the water at a good pace. The salt spray dashed up in our faces and our hair blew into our eyes, but we did not care, for we reached the slip a full minute before Mr. Bennett, and could exult over his defeat even while obliged to admire his boat.

"But this is not the boat you left at the slip the day it stormed," remarked Gabrielle; "this is much newer—yes, and much prettier, but I believe the other is faster. When you race with us you must always take your swiftest boat, you know."

"But I can't race that boat, unfortunately," he returned, with a short laugh. "When I came to get it that morning it had vanished entirely—broken away, I suppose—and I had to go home in a fishing smack I happened to be able to hire. I think it is very inhospitable of you to keep your boat-house door locked."

"I think so, too," agreed Elizabeth, "and if I can ever remember it I am going to get a locksmith from the village and have it opened."

We were all ready to do justice to the nice hot cakes and tea Mary Anne had waiting for us, and we found Mr. Blake quite an acquisition. He was a quiet man, who, as Gabrielle said, always seemed to be about to make a brilliant remark and never did, but kept us on the alert waiting for it.

Lady Edith took off her hat and laid it on the chair beside her, and I idly picked it up, smoothing out the veil which was knotted around it and thinking how wonderfully well it suited her flower-like face. Suddenly I paused, however, for in the veil, fastening the chiffon to the hat brim, I saw a small gold pin shaped like a key, and the counterpart of one link of my cuff button.

I was about to draw it out and ask her about it, for the design was unusual, when I saw a gray shadow cross her face and her eyes dilate strangely. She was looking beyond me, straight at Gordon Bennett, and I looked also, wondering greatly.

He was bending forward, cup in hand, talking to Gabrielle, and a ray from the setting sun reached the spoon, causing it to gleam as he moved it and insensibly attract the eye. Something else gleamed also from his white cravat, and as he changed his position I saw that his scarf-pin was the head of the Sphinx in raised dull gold.

VIII.

"WHAT I like best about Mary Anne," remarked Elizabeth appreciatively, "is that she is so *dependable*."

We were standing at my window, watching Mary Anne and a market basket disappear in the direction of the village. We regarded her broad back and deliberate movements with genuine affection, knowing that her foraging would be eminently successful and our larder satisfactorily stocked, which desirable result was not by any means certain to follow when we ourselves went to market.

Gabrielle and Elizabeth had their hats on and even carried gloves, which meant that something unusual was about to happen.

"If we had not made such a definite engagement with the Campbells, I would not go one step," announced Gabrielle. "I don't like to leave you alone with a headache."

"Of course you must go," I returned ruefully. "We have set too many times and been disappointed to put it off again. Then, too, remember Lord Wilfrid is to meet you over there at luncheon, and as he must have already started, there is no way of letting him know. I will be all right when you come home, but it is too bad."

For this was the day agreed upon, after various disappointments, for a shopping expedition to the small town across the water. We intended to take advantage of the little steamer that crossed every morning and returned every afternoon, explore the place, and invest in a few articles the village could not supply. Lady Edith Campbell and her brother were to join us, and we anticipated a very jolly time.

I was therefore awfully disappointed when I awakened that morning with the dull pain in my eyeballs I have reason to respect and treat with every deference. While the girls made their toilets, protesting vigorously against leaving me alone, I rested my heavy head against the window frame and tried to calculate how long it would probably be before my brain felt clear again and life would seem worth living.

"It is the kindest thing you can do for me," I said at last. "I

prefer to be alone when my head aches. When you get off I will take something and lie down, and Mary Anne will make me some tea for lunch. By the time you come home tired and rather cross, I shall be all freshly dressed and as cool and comfortable as possible. Now, if you don't start, you will miss your boat."

They finally set out, and I watched them walk down the path toward the village. Both were tall and slender, but there the resemblance ceased entirely. Gabrielle was strictly tailor-made from shoe to hat, but Elizabeth inclined toward softening the severity of such costume by various feminine devices very telling in their effect, especially upon the masculine element of society.

When Gabrielle turned and waved her tightly-rolled silk umbrella in a farewell salute, I thought her plain, well fitting skirt and jacket, immaculately severe linen shirt-waist, stiff cravat, and trim little hat with its knot of ribbon and long black quill, the only correct costume for any one. But when Elizabeth also turned and raised her red parasol I was not so sure, for the pretty tan-colored skirt and short Eton jacket, the dainty white blouse, and the light straw hat with a red rose under the brim, were certainly very becoming, as well as entirely suitable.

I lay quite still for some hours, then found myself gradually reviving and with a strong desire for a cup of tea. The house seemed very quiet, and though I opened my door and called several times, there was no response. I was forced to conclude that Mary Anne had taken advantage of our intended absence, to spend the day in the village, not knowing I had remained at home.

I therefore got up and went down to the kitchen, to see what I could find; for I had eaten no breakfast, and felt that I would now be all the better for a little food.

The fire was out, and the prospects discouraging to one disinclined to make much of an effort; but I found some crackers, and remembered that Mary Anne had mentioned putting the milk on the hanging shelf in the cellar, so I got a glass and went after it, cracker jar in hand.

The cellar had been well aired and was much less damp and musty than on my previous visit. Also, the litter of boxes and other rubbish had been neatly piled along the wall, and the whole place seemed more habitable. The sea breeze swept through the open windows until the hanging shelf creaked on its rusty chains, and a ray of sunlight penetrated the dark recess, almost reaching the packing case at the end.

I found the milk and filled my glass, then wandered aimlessly into the recess, sat down upon an upturned box, and began my lunch. I do not understand why I should have elected to do this, when the entire house was at my disposal, but sometimes one obeys an impulse without any tangible reason for doing so.

As I sat contentedly nibbling a cracker and sipping the milk I heard voices, muffled but quite distinct, as though on the other side of a thin partition. At first I was alarmed, but in an instant I recognized Mary Anne's familiar tones and was correspondingly relieved, although her whereabouts was still a mystery.

"Now, then," said a man's voice impatiently, "don't let's have a scene, and, for heaven's sake, don't turn on the water-works—this place is damp enough already."

"Oh, Willy, my dear, dear boy," she said appealingly, "don't go for to be short wi' me—don't, now!"

There was silence for a minute, and then the man spoke again.

"I tell you there's no use talking any more. I've begun the thing, and I'm going through with it."

"But the danger, Willy, the danger!"

"I'm used to danger."

"Aye, worse luck, that you are! And me like to break me 'eart wi' thinkin' of you o' nights."

"Then don't think."

"Ah, 'ow can I 'elp it? Me that carried you in me arms when you was a little babby!"

"Well, now, will you do what I ask, or won't you?"

"Don't ask it of me, Willy—don't, now."

"I do ask it."

I forgot all honorable scruples against eavesdropping, and listened with all my ears. I can only add in self defense that I believe any one else in my place would have done the same.

He muttered something I could not hear, however, and Mary Anne gave a stifled sob.

"Oh, you did n't use to be so 'ard!" she exclaimed. "It's *she* 'as changed you. It's 'er fault—with 'er soft white 'ands and 'er 'ard, crool 'eart!"

"Don't you say anything against Nell. I won't have it."

"Oh, it's allus Nell nowadays. And what does she care what 'appens to you, so long as she's safe 'erself? If only you'd took to the fishing trade, Willy, and lived respectable, 'ow 'appy we might 'ave been, and Sarah Cushley ready to marry you if you'd said the word."

"Sarah Cushley indeed!"

"It's the books—that's what done it. Many's the time I've been sorry I ever let you go to school. Many's the time I've wished I'd listened to yer uncle when 'e wanted to take you on 'is sloop afore the mast. Fur 'e said good 'ard work, with a rope's end now and then, would make a man o' you. But you'd a look o' yer father, and you 'ad 'is fine ways——"

He interrupted her with an unpleasant laugh.

"Fine ways indeed! That's all he ever gave his son. Don't blame me for anything, mother—look nearer home. I'm not saying it was all your fault. You thought you were married."

"God knows I did, Willy!"

"You brought me into the world, and found you were deceived, like many another fool of a girl—and serves them right, too, for thinking a gentleman would marry them."

"Oh, my boy!"

There was real tragedy in the exclamation, and I found myself wiping away a sympathetic tear, but the man's voice was as cold as ever.

"So I started life under a handicap—a thoroughbred mongrel, made up of the worst of you and the worst of him. And I turned out a bad lot, did n't I? But whose fault was it?"

"Mine, Willy, mine."

"Yes, yours. Branded from the beginning with the bar sinister—different from other children. Don't I remember it all? Growing up with *his* aristocratic tastes and *your* environment; born with the instincts of his class, which make luxuries necessities, and no money to gratify them. And then the cold shoulder everywhere—contemptuous pity from his class, open ridicule from yours."

"I sent you away, Willy. I took the bit of money he gave me and sent you to the States to school, where you could be a gentleman and no questions asked. And I loved you, darlin'; I allus loved you."

"You gave me what you could, I suppose. I'm not blaming you for that. But you turned me loose with a little learning and no money—a dangerous combination, mother. So I went to the bad, preferring a short life and a merry one. Then I met Nell, and was happy, for she loved me. Don't say she did n't—she did, I tell you; she *does*."

"And so do I, my boy. Who could love you like your mother?"

"Then, mother, do as I tell you, without any more fuss. Come away from this place—it gets on my nerves—and give me something to drink, for I was up all night, and have more work ahead of me."

Their voices died away, and I sat for some time longer meditating upon what I had heard, and, if the truth must be told, afraid to emerge from the cellar while the man was on the premises. At last a sound in the kitchen indicated that Mary Anne had returned alone, so I went boldly up the outside steps and around to the kitchen door.

She sat on a chair near the table, her apron thrown over her head, the picture of despair, and I advanced quietly and laid my hand upon her shoulder, for my heart ached for the poor soul.

"Mary Anne," I said very gently, "I was in the cellar just now, and heard you talking."

She stared at me with widely distended eyes and trembling lips.

"Miss Elise!" she gasped. "You here?"

"I did n't go with the others, because my head ached. You have not been honest with us, Mary Anne. We did n't know you had a son."

She rested her head in her hands and burst into tears.

"Oh, Miss Elise," she sobbed, "don't look at me that way—I'm un'appy enough without that. Yes, miss, I 'ave a son, and if you 'eard us talkin', you know all about it. He took to drink, miss, and was allus in trouble. And last year 'e got to quarrelling—in Montreal it was—and 'e stabbed a man. And the man up and died. So they're after 'im fur it, and they'll 'ang 'im, miss, they'll 'ang my boy if they ketches 'im."

She rocked to and fro a moment in speechless misery, and then continued:

"And I give 'im money, Miss Elise, but I don't let 'im come up 'ere, except to-day 'e follered me unbeknownst, miss, and I let 'im go in the coal 'ole, God furgive me fur the liberty I took! Mostly 'e comes down the shore in 'is boat, and I meets 'im quite private. But I've give 'im all the money I 'ad, and my brother's give him money, too, and 'e's goin' back to the old country to live a decent life."

"Where were you when I heard you talking?"

"In the coal 'ole at the back o' the cellar. And I beg your parding fur the liberty I took, but don't lay it up agin me, miss, fur what else could a mother do? And, Miss Elise, darlin', you'll keep a quiet tongue in yer 'ead, won't you, and let 'im git away? Fur 'e's shipped as a sailor and sails on Sunday mornin'."

I said I would talk it over with the others, but I thought if she promised never to allow him near the house again we would say nothing, as he was really going to leave the country and reform. She quite cheered up then, and insisted on getting me a lunch, waiting on me with a humility and alacrity I found most touching. This vagrant son explained various little mysteries about Mary Anne which had puzzled me a good deal, and I felt very sorry, indeed, for the poor creature with her secret trouble.

I had been so excited that I quite forgot my own ills, and longed for the return of the girls, that I might talk the matter over with them. They could not get home before six o'clock, however, so I went out on the veranda to wait for them and enjoy the salt breeze.

To my surprise, I found Lady Edith Campbell reclining in the hammock, reading the morning paper. She laughed as I exclaimed in astonishment, and came to meet me with a kiss of welcome.

"You did not expect me," she said, "and I certainly did not expect to be here, but I woke with such a wretched headache this mornin' I simply could not go."

"Why, so did I."

"I know—Gabrielle told me. They wanted to put it off again, but Wilfrid had already gone, and I knew he would be disappointed, so I persuaded them to go. About noon my head got better, and my room felt so close and stuffy I longed for your cool breeze and lovely view, so I managed to dress and walk up here, thinking we might compare symptoms. I rang, but no one came, so I appropriated the hammock, as my walk had used me up completely. I hope you don't mind very much."

I hastened to assure her I was delighted, as I had had more than enough of my own society. So we had a long, comfortable afternoon, and by and by Mary Anne brought us tea, with an appealing glance at me which I interpreted as a plea for silence, and I am glad to be able to say I kept her secret inviolate.

"I envy you your complexion," I remarked, as I admired the sea-shell tints of my guest's face. "Now, I am quite pale and heavy-eyed, but you look as fresh as a daisy, yet you have had just as horrid a day as I."

"It takes a great deal to make the Campbells lose their color," she replied, "or, rather, to make it *stay* lost. I was pale enough this morning, but as soon as the pain left me, the red returned. I am quite shockingly healthy, you know—good, sturdy old Scotch blood."

"But Lord Wilfrid often looks very pale."

"Oh, Wilfrid is an alien—we all tell him so, much to his disgust; and he is far from well, poor fellow, although I think he is improving. Have you noticed that he seems brighter and better of late?"

I made an appropriate reply, and the conversation drifted to other things. As we sat together in the hammock, swaying gently to and fro, I happened to notice that in the lace at her throat she wore the little gold key which had excited my curiosity once before.

I spoke of it, and she at once drew it out and handed it to me, while I told her the story of the cuff button and its unusual design.

"And," I concluded, "your pin surprised me, and so did Mr. Bennett's, but please tell me why you were interested in it."

Her sweet face grew very grave, and she hesitated a moment before replying, then took the pin from me and held it in her hand.

"Elise," she said slowly, "this little pin was given me by one I loved very dearly, and whom I have—lost."

"By death?"

"No, not death; there are worse things—far worse."

I thought of Mary Anne, and wondered if she would not endorse this sentiment.

"I kept the little gold key," she continued, touching it lovingly. "It was the *only* thing I kept, but I could not give it up. And he—but why should I burden you with my trouble? It is all past and over, and I never refer to it."

"Some day," I hazarded, "you will marry and be happy."

"I am happy now," she returned; "or, rather, I make myself believe it. But I shall not marry, for I have but one heart, and this is its key. I should like to see your button some time when it is convenient, for it was a strange coincidence. As for Mr. Bennett——"

"Well?"

"I was not looking at his pin, but at his face. He is so like—so strangely like—the *other*."

I could not think of anything to say, for at critical moments my vocabulary always proves inadequate, so I merely took her hand and stroked it gently.

"I don't know why I have told you this," she said, "but you have all been so good to us that we are no longer strangers, nor even mere acquaintances; and my heart is still so heavy sometimes. We all have graves in our hearts, we women. Yours has not come yet, and I hope it may be long deferred; mine is still green enough to be painful when I visit it. Forgive me, dear; you look quite sad, and, indeed, I am not worthy of so much sympathy."

"You are very brave," I said admiringly.

"I do not show the white feather to the world, that is all. But tell me about Mr. Blake, whom I met here the other day. Who and what is he?"

I could tell her very little, for Mr. Bennett had proved uncommunicative about his friend, and beyond the fact that he would be here for an indefinite period I knew nothing.

"But do tell me," I remarked, as she rose to go, "has Mrs. Bundy heard anything about her jewels?"

"Not yet. Poor old soul, she is quite heartbroken. It is generally believed a detective is in the hotel, posing as a guest, but he does not seem to be making any progress. I feel perfectly comfortable about my few possessions, however, thanks to your goodness."

She went away then, and I sat alone in the hammock, thinking of the two secrets I had learned that afternoon, and watching the glow of the setting sun, which turned some sails pale pink and others pearly white, as the boatloads of merry-makers sailed home to dinner.

After a while Gabrielle and Elizabeth appeared, rather the worse for wear, and inclined to be indignant. They had not enjoyed themselves; the shops were no good whatever, Lady Edith had been unable to go, and there had been some misunderstanding, for Lord Wilfrid had not met them at the time appointed.

Altogether, the day had been a failure, and it was not until a good dinner had calmed their aggrieved spirits that I began to relate my own experiences, giving the history of Mary Anne with as much pathos as I could manage.

"Of course," remarked Elizabeth, "we ought to discharge her. It is not pleasant to think of a murderer being concealed in the house."

"Good gracious!" exclaimed Gabrielle, in an alarmed voice. "What are you talking about? Think of her waffles."

"Oh, I was not going to do it; I only said that we *ought* to. She is too valuable to lose, especially if he really is going away."

So we told Mary Anne that it was all right, and we would allow her son to escape as he had planned. She was pathetically grateful, and promised never to allow him on the premises again, so we felt quite comfortable about him; and, after all, why should we interfere with a fellow-creature in his effort to preserve life, since the life he took could not be restored by his capture?

But my last thought that night was of Lady Edith and the look in her brown eyes as she held the little key.

IX.

"My love is like a red, red rose
That's newly blown in June;
My love is like a melody
That's sweetly played in tune."

It was a baritone voice, so clear, so strong, and yet so sweet that involuntarily we stopped talking and listened until the end of the verse.

"Where is it?" I questioned, for the singer was quite invisible.

"I think," said Gordon Bennett, "it must come from a boat; it will round the point presently."

We were walking along the beach, and had wandered farther than we intended, almost to the point of the island, in fact, and, quite tired out, I had seated myself upon a rock to rest a while before going back.

"I wish he would sing again," I remarked; "don't you?"

"Well, no," returned my companion; "to be frank, I would rather have your undivided attention."

"Why, please?"

"I suppose it is because I was born with a selfish disposition."

"Listen!" I exclaimed, as the song began again, closer this time, with every word distinct and clear.

"So fair is she, my dearest dear,
So much in love am I,
That I would love her all my life
Till all the seas run dry;
Till all the seas run dry, my dear,
And rocks melt wi' the sun——"

The boat was quite near now, and the song ceased abruptly as the singer stood erect and waved his hat cheerfully; a white parasol in the stern also beckoned invitingly.

"Why," I said, "they are waving at us."

"It is Graham," said Gordon Bennett briefly, "and your friend Lady Edith."

"So it is." I was genuinely pleased, for I could see they wanted us to join them, and I was more than willing to avoid the walk home.

"Get aboard," called Mr. Graham, as the bow grated against a rock. "You can do it, if you don't mind stepping from one rock to the other."

"We can do it easily," I replied, "if Mr. Bennett will give me his hand to steady me."

"Would you not rather walk home?"

Mr. Bennett's voice was certainly not encouraging, but I ignored it, for I wanted the sail.

"Come, Mr. Bennett," called Lady Edith; "we have plenty of room. I have been spending the morning with Mrs. Graham, and we went out for a sail just after lunch, but she could not be persuaded to join us."

"Oh!" I said, as I took Mr. Graham's outstretched hand and stepped into the boat, which wobbled unpleasantly. "It is awfully nice—after you get in."

"It is a bully day for a sail," he returned, his face glowing with the pleasure it had given him. "I only wish you would talk a bit to Mrs. Graham and get her to come out just once. She has no idea how fine it is."

"My wife," he explained to Mr. Bennett, who had followed me into the boat, "has an unaccountable aversion to the water; and she will not trust herself on it, even with me."

"Indeed!" remarked Mr. Bennett dryly. "She must condemn herself to a good many hours alone, for I notice you are out constantly."

"Oh, yes; we agreed that I was to go whenever I chose. She does not wish to keep me at home, and we quite understand each other on the subject."

"You were singing," I said, as the sail filled and the boat cut through the water; "won't you please go on. I had no idea you had such a lovely voice."

"Yes," said Lady Edith; "do sing again, Mr. Graham. It was quite lovely, and you must not be selfish with such a talent."

So Mr. Graham sang again, and we listened entranced, for his voice was very melodious, and he sang as the birds do, with no apparent effort or consciousness of his charm. Lady Edith in the stern kept her face in the shadow of her parasol and said but little, yet I saw her eyes grow misty, and remembered our conversation about the little

gold key. Was she thinking of the man she loved? I wondered dreamily.

"I'll land you at your own dock," he remarked, as he steered for the shore. "And I'm sure I am very grateful for the nice things you say about the songs. I sing because I like to sing—just as I yield to every impulse whenever I can get any pleasure out of it. It seems the simplest thing to do."

It was rather a dangerous theory, I thought, although as I looked at Mr. Graham's ruddy face and heard his careless laugh I quite understood that he would generally live up to what he said. And I had a quick recollection, too, of the package Elizabeth had opened; was that caused by a sudden impulse, I wondered, and had he extracted his full measure of satisfaction out of it?

Lord Wilfrid was waiting on the dock when we landed, his cap pulled down over his eyes and his manner the reverse of cordial.

"I have looked everywhere for you, Edith," he said. "You did not tell me you expected to go sailing. Did you make up your party this morning?"

He looked at Gordon Bennett as he spoke, and paused for a reply.

"It was quite unpremeditated," said that gentleman. "In fact, your sister and Mr. Graham were kind enough to pick us up a good bit down the beach and give us a lift home."

"Was any one else with you?"

"I took a short sail with Mr. Graham, Wilfrid," said Lady Edith. "I am sorry if you have needed me, but I thought you intended fishing this afternoon."

She looked steadily at him, and he lowered his eyes instinctively. But his face, as he watched Mr. Graham push off and sail away, was heavy and lowering, and his fingers twitched nervously.

"Listen," I said. "Mr. Graham is singing again."

He was standing by his sail now, the light of the sun full upon him, apparently unconscious of the picture he made.

"And I will love you still, my dear,
When all the seas run dry——"

The words of the old song died away, and I turned to my companions.

"Let us go home," I said; but Lady Edith and her brother had already gone.

X.

"Of course," said Gordon Bennett, "you know your own affairs best."

"I am glad you have come to such a sensible conclusion," I replied,

leaning over the edge of the boat and trailing my hand in the water, although I knew such an act is always irritating to the one who manipulates the sail.

"And no doubt you think I'm a very fresh sort of a chap."

I preserved an ostentatious silence.

"I am answered," he said, with a vexed laugh; "found guilty on my own indictment. But I hoped you would not agree so unreservedly."

I wiped my hand on my handkerchief, spreading the latter to dry in the sun, and looking out to sea with apparent absorption in the horizon.

"One ear and one side of your face are very red. Is it sunburn or wrath?"

"The sun is hot," I replied, with alacrity. "Perhaps we had better go home. Will you steer for the shore?"

"Not on your life! I've got you out here now, and I intend to keep you. You are powerless, mademoiselle."

I knew I was, and raged inwardly. We had been spending the morning on the water, a not infrequent occurrence of late, and until the introduction of a certain unfortunate topic I had enjoyed myself immensely; for the day was perfection, and my companion thoroughly understood the management of his boat, as well as the art of being agreeable.

The conversation had somehow drifted to the robbery at the hotel, and I had thoughtlessly mentioned the safe in our dining-room and Lady Edith's jewels reposing therein for protection. He had protested against our assuming such a responsibility, and urged their immediate return to their owner, which proposition I declined to consider, and the argument waxed somewhat hot, ending with an emphatic assertion on his part that we should not be allowed to leave home again without a guardian. This had been the last straw, and I had replied with an asperity which called forth the remark at the beginning of this chapter.

"Look here," he resumed firmly. "I'm not going to back down on one word I have said, but I'm sorry if you are angry about it. I think you don't quite understand my motive. I do not mean to be officious."

"Let us talk of something else, Mr. Bennett."

"But listen, Miss Elise. By your own admission, you really know nothing whatever about these people."

"You forget that they are older friends than yourself, after all."

"The general asked me to call; otherwise I should not have ventured to intrude."

His manner was decidedly stiff, and he jerked the tiller resentfully; as we changed our course in swift response, a smothered exclamation escaped against my will, for the boat careened alarmingly.

"Don't be frightened," he said, forgetting his irritation. "I won't upset you."

"I'm not frightened."

"And don't quarrel with me any more. I won't have my morning spoiled by any confounded Englishman."

"It was a woman," I murmured, "not a man."

We both laughed, and by common consent let the matter drop for the time being, for I was quite willing to resume the lazy, delightful camaraderie into which we had drifted, and to banish unpleasant subjects which might interfere with it.

So we talked or were silent as the spirit moved, while the white-capped waves lapped against the boat, and the water danced in the sunlight, with cool green shadows here and there, deep and unfathomable, as shadows should be when the ocean lies beneath them.

"Do you know," he said, at last, "that I have in my possession something belonging to you?"

"Oh," I said, with what I flattered myself was fine indifference, "I think you must be mistaken. I have not lost anything."

I was bareheaded, for I liked to feel the wind blow through my hair, and as it curled naturally I was comfortably certain that my personal appearance would not be endangered by so doing. I wished, however, that my hat was firmly pinned upon my head, as he leaned forward and looked closely at me, his blue eyes laughing, and a dimple in his cheek very apparent. I always thought dimples so out of place on a man—perhaps because I have none myself and always wanted them.

"Why are n't your side-combs mates?" he inquired.

"Because I like them best this way;" I tried to speak carelessly, but his laugh was so spontaneous and merry that I gave up all effort at pretense and joined in heartily.

"When are you going to give it back to me?" I asked.

"Not yet," he said, suddenly serious. "I must return it in my own way, and—I do not think the time has come, do you?"

But I did not answer, for I felt my face grow suddenly hot, and sometimes one has nothing to say when one most desires to speak.

"We must go home," I said slowly. "The morning has quite gone. Take me in, please."

This time he made no objection, but headed for the shore, and as we approached the little slip he turned with an evident effort and addressed me soberly.

"Miss Elise," he said, "at the risk of offending you again, I must say something more."

"Don't," I entreated; "it's not worth while—don't spoil the morning. You know you said you did not want to do that."

"Give back that box to her—Lady Edith. If you do not, you will certainly regret it. But if you *won't*, in spite of what I tell you, for heaven's sake don't mention it to any one as you did to me this morning—to the Grahams, for instance, or any one at all."

"I am not likely to say anything," I returned stiffly. "I *very* much regret having mentioned it to you. By the way," I continued, "I quite forgot something important. At least, it is important to me, because I am curious. Where did you get your scarf-pin?"

"My scarf-pin?"

His hand involuntarily sought his throat, but he was wearing a negligée shirt and soft silk tie.

"Oh, I don't mean to-day. The Sphinx's head, you know, in dull gold. Where did it come from?"

It was a simple enough question, and one easily answered, but Gordon Bennett flushed deep red beneath his tan and brought the boat up beside the slip in silence.

"Well?"

In retaliation for his persistence in the matter of the jewels, I was determined to press the question, now that I saw he wished to avoid a reply.

"My pin? Oh, yes, I remember. I'm glad you liked it."

"I am not so sure I actually liked it, but it interested me."

"Why?"

"Oh, because it *did*. I would like to know where you got it."

"Well—I found it."

"Where?"

Again a pause, and again the blood mounted to his face.

"Where did you find it? I would really like to know."

"In the streets of New York."

His eyes refused to meet mine, and I knew intuitively that he lied; also that he realized I knew it.

I said no more, but stepped out on the slip with an unpleasant tightening of the muscles of my throat and a curious sensation that everything was slipping away from me.

"Good-by," I said dully, as I reached the steps, and he raised his cap in silence.

At the top I paused and looked back, for I thought I heard my name. He sat bareheaded in the stern of his boat, gazing after me, but made no effort to attract my attention or to follow me ashore, so I decided I was mistaken and he had not called me. I wished he had. I wanted to go back and ask him to explain, but pride forbade, and I resumed my walk to the house with my head as high in the air as I could get it, hoping to impress him with the dignity of my exit and general air of frosty disapproval.

Elizabeth called to me as I passed the door of her room, where she was reposing luxuriously on her couch, book in hand.

"Did you have a good time?" she inquired, with interest.

"No," I returned briefly; "horrid."

"That's too bad. And oh, *look* at your nose! How did you ever get so burned?"

Elizabeth has a straight little nose which is my envy as well as my admiration, and she is always very careful to guard it from too intimate an acquaintance with the sun, so I knew her exclamation was occasioned by genuine sympathy. Nevertheless, I refused her offers of cold cream and other first aids to the complexion rather ungratefully and went on to my own room, where she promptly followed me.

"Did Mr. Bennett say anything about to-night?" she asked, as she settled herself on the foot of the bed.

"No, why should he?"

"You don't mean to say you have forgotten?"

"Forgotten what?"

"Elise, sometimes I think you must be in love—or, rather, I *should* think so were it any other girl. Don't you know that we give a dinner to-night? Our very first formal effort, to celebrate Lady Edith's birthday."

I turned, brush in hand, and stared at her. I had indeed forgotten, although our menu for the occasion had been discussed and our toilets decided upon that morning at breakfast.

"And that's why I was concerned about your nose," continued Elizabeth cheerfully, "and your neck, too, for that matter, for of course you must wear an evening gown, and we all want to look well. You had really better try the cold cream and other stuff."

This time I did not refuse, for I had a mental vision of my face, as the glass reported it, rising from the delicate lace of my white frock, and the picture did not please me. So I spent the afternoon in anointing my unfortunate countenance, and reflecting upon the frailties of man—thinking of him as a species rather than as a personality, and determining to let him severely alone in the abstract, even while meditating upon a proper course of discipline for the individual.

XI.

"How well Lady Edith looks in evening dress!" remarked Elizabeth, as we discussed the events of the evening after the departure of our guests.

"Mr. Blake evidently thought so," returned Gabrielle. "He had eyes for no one else. But she *was* stunning in that black gown."

"And Lord Wilfrid looked awfully distinguished," continued Elizabeth thoughtfully. "His quiet, reserved manner is very impressive,

don't you think so? The Americans simply were not in it with the English."

"Blood will tell," said Gabrielle, who poses as being very democratic, but is at heart a thorough aristocrat.

"And Mary Anne's entrées were perfection," resumed Elizabeth, with great satisfaction. "She is a treasure. To think of cooking and serving that dinner all herself! What does it matter to such a genius if she has a dozen worthless sons?"

"What indeed?" I acquiesced, yawning, and proposed bed, but the others objected, saying that it was not late and they were very wide awake.

"Let's have a prow," suggested Gabrielle, who loved to wander about the cottage and look at the ocean from all points of the compass the last thing before retiring, as though she expected it to vanish during the night and must make the most of her time.

"Not in thin slippers," I protested, "and good clothes."

"There is no grass up here," she replied, "and we can hold up our skirts. Do come, Elizabeth, just for a little while."

I was sorry I had not gone also as soon as they turned the corner, and, picking up my long skirt carefully, started in pursuit. I saw, however, that they were deep in one of the heart to heart conversations in which they sometimes indulge, and decided not to interrupt them, but to wait until they came back to earth and remembered my existence. So, after a moment's hesitation, I sat down on the steps leading to the slip, knowing they would certainly visit it before they went in, as it was Gabrielle's favorite view. Even to-night, when there was no moon and the outlook was therefore limited, I was sure she would not desert it.

Resting my chin in my hand, I reviewed the evening, which, from my own private and particular standpoint, had been a failure. Elizabeth had mentioned Lord Wilfrid's reserved manner, but to me he had seemed distinctly sulky, and I had more than once seen his sister look at him appealingly, and at last with an indignant sparkle in her brown eyes, after which he roused himself and conversed in a perfunctory manner with his neighbor—who happened to be my unfortunate self.

Now, I had fully intended to impress Gordon Bennett with the fact that he was still under the ban of my displeasure, and in the privacy of my own room had rehearsed a dignified bearing and certain imaginary speeches I thought would be very effective. It was therefore somewhat disconcerting to be politely ignored by the gentleman in question, who, beyond a civil bow and smile, had appeared unaware of my existence and had devoted himself exclusively to Elizabeth, who looked especially pretty in her pale blue princess gown, and whose nose, being entirely guiltless of sunburn, did not shine.

The air of jollity which had distinguished our little impromptu feasts seemed to me lacking on this more formal occasion. It was as though our guests had put on another personality with their evening clothes, and I found it unfamiliar and hard to tolerate.

Lady Edith, to be sure, was a joy to behold, and talked with unusual brilliancy. Her white shoulders and golden hair were strikingly accentuated by her low-cut black gown, and the color came and went in her cheeks like the fitful spark of an opal.

Mr. Blake, the quiet, the self-contained, beside whom she was placed, let his soup grow cold as he looked at her, and had evidently forgotten the presence of any one else long before the appearance of the salad. By the time coffee arrived I decided he was hopelessly lost, and felt a sincere sympathy for him, for in the lace of her bodice gleamed the little gold key, and I knew it locked all men but one out of her heart.

I felt very sorry for them both, in the light of my recently acquired information. There were shadows beneath her eyes, and a repressed restlessness of manner which I attributed to overtaxed nerves, for I knew she felt it incumbent upon her to make a special effort to be agreeable, since the dinner was given in her honor. Perhaps, I reflected, the anniversary brought with it painful memories of other days, and for her sake as well as my own I wished it were over.

Well, it *was* over, and our guests had been gone for an hour, though it was now but eleven o'clock. I imagined Gordon Bennett and his friend arriving at their island and discussing us over their cigars, with doubtless a cooling and stimulating beverage to refresh them after their exertions, and I would have given much to hear what they said.

Gabrielle often remarks that she never hears ice clink in a glass and smells a good cigar that she does not wish she were a man, and secretly I sympathize with her, although I always make a point of disagreeing in a slightly superior manner, as though such things were beneath contempt.

I was thinking of this now in a dreamy, half conscious way, when I suddenly became aware that I actually smelled a cigar—and a very good one. Moreover, the odor came from beneath, and as the steps led directly to the slip the conclusion was forced upon me that some one was down there. Curiously enough, I was not frightened, but decidedly indignant. Some one was taking a great liberty with private property, I thought, and I wished I were brave enough to go down and order him—or them—away forthwith.

There was, as I have already remarked, no moon, and I could not positively distinguish anything as I peered down into the darkness, but thought I saw a point of light like the end of a cigar, and certainly heard a subdued murmur of voices.

In another instant the slip and everything upon it stood out against the darkness with the clearness and accuracy of a picture thrown upon a screen, its every detail distinct and visible. After an incredulous moment, I understood, for I recognized the broad beam of white light which fell across the water with dazzling brilliancy. Our friend the searchlight had paid us many visits since that first night upon the slip, and we had come to regard it with an amused tolerance, and to watch for it, especially on dark nights or in bad weather. We seldom watched in vain, for it was a persistent and hard-working light and explored the island, or at least our end of it, with painstaking thoroughness and regularity.

So I sat in the sheltering darkness on the top of the steps and looked down upon the illuminated slip, while my heart thumped audibly and I wished most ardently I had never ventured out.

For there were two men upon it, and an unlighted steam launch waited beside it. One of them knelt before the door of the boat-house, evidently trying to unlock it, while the other watched with interest, and finally produced a bunch of keys from his own pocket and selected one as he handed them to his companion, with apparent directions how to apply it. And I saw plainly that the man who supplied the keys was Gordon Bennett, who, with his friend Mr. Blake, was trying to force an entrance into our boat-house.

Another instant, and I sprang to my feet and fled incontinently, my fingers in my ears and my progress sadly hampered by the long trailing skirt over which I tripped and stumbled, and which, I will remark in passing, was irrevocably ruined.

I do not know why I ran, nor why I stopped up my ears, since I had not heard a word of any kind, and was certainly in no personal danger; but I rushed wildly on and finally cast myself breathless upon my bed, my pulses throbbing painfully and my whole being quivering with a sense of shame. For I had so nearly loved him. I knew it now, even as I knew his unworthiness. Had he not lied to me that afternoon? Lied about so simple a matter that I should then have understood he had something to conceal—something of which to be ashamed. And now he was trying to force an entrance to the boat-house! But why? Was he a common thief?

"Oh, no," I cried, aloud; "no, not *that*!"

Then I sat suddenly upright, for I remembered the safe in the dining-room, with the jewels locked in it—the pearls which belonged to Lady Edith's mother—and I remembered also my indiscreet disclosures regarding it, and the questions he had asked, even while professing his disapproval—keen, searching questions as to the exact location of the safe and the form of lock upon it. And I had told him everything he wanted to know quite willingly.

"Oh!" I cried again. "I'm a fool, and he knew it, and used me for a tool."

Therein lay the chief sting. He had used me as a tool, and my woman's vanity was wounded to the quick.

Going into the next room, I leaned out the open window, looking toward the ocean and watching for something, I was not sure what. The searchlight was at work again, and by its light I saw a little dark boat steal away from our slip and make its way toward the point of the island. I could see two figures in its stern, so I knew the key had not been successful and our boat-house was still closed. I supposed also that the presence of the searchlight had frightened them away, and felt grateful to it.

I heard the voices of the girls, and returned to my own room, hastily removing my dress and slipping into bed. To-morrow I would tell them, but not to-night—I could not talk to-night. I could not even think.

"She's sound asleep," whispered Gabrielle, after an inquiring peep over the bed. "It must be later than we thought."

"It's awful the way we forget the flight of time when we get to talking," returned Elizabeth remorsefully, and they lowered their light and moved softly, in order not to disturb me.

But I lay with widely opened eyes, staring into the darkness, long after their quiet breathing told me they had gone peacefully to sleep. How hot the pillow was! I turned it restlessly, hoping the other side might contain a soporific influence and I could get away from the tormenting, ever recurring question, *what did he want in there?* So far as we knew, the place was empty; why, then, should any man want to force an entrance?

Perhaps, after all, it was nothing that could not be explained. I would write him in the morning and tell him quite frankly what I had seen, and ask for an explanation. And he, of course, would answer promptly. Then I remembered the scarf-pin of the Sphinx's head, and knew that any explanation, no matter how plausible, would always be accompanied by a doubt in my own mind.

I remembered something else also—Mrs. Bundy's emeralds, and the supposition that the one who took them had departed without waiting for breakfast. Had he not by his own showing left the hotel very early indeed the morning after the storm?

I tried to put this thought away from me, but it returned again and again with hideous pertinacity, until, after a long time, my senses became dulled and I fell into an uneasy doze, where I heard Lady Edith demanding her mother's pearls of Gordon Bennett, while he insisted he was having them set into side-combs for me, and could not, therefore, comply with her request.

XII.

"If you please, miss, could you come to Mrs. Graham?"

This unwelcome summons forced itself upon me as I lay luxuriously reading upon the couch in the living-room the day following our dinner party.

"Did she send for me?"

"No, miss."

Mrs. Graham's servant, a half-grown girl with a face of surprising stupidity, stood stolidly before me, the ends of a small shawl held under her chin, and a frightened expression in her small eyes.

"Then, why did you come?"

To my surprise, the girl put her face in her hands and began to cry with a sniffing persistency very annoying to hear.

"I'm scared of her," she sobbed; "she's that queer, miss. She's went all blue and stiff-like, and Mr. Graham ain't there, nor nobody but me. And, seeing as how you come to the house sometimes, miss, I thought as maybe you might help me, fur I'm scared to stay alone, so I am."

I rose reluctantly, for I knew but little of illness, and was also "scared" of the prospect; but go I must, in common decency, and alone at that, for Mary Anne and Elizabeth were out, and Gabrielle was shut up in her room with a bad cold, the result of too much wandering about with thin slippers the night before.

A chill east wind was blowing, and I shivered as we hastened down the path and up the narrow steps.

Mrs. Graham lay rigid upon the couch, her eyes shut and her lips blue and pinched. I put my hand over her heart, and its faint flutter was a great relief, as I had thought her dead.

"It is only a faint," I exclaimed, and directed the bewildered girl to assist me in my efforts to revive her. At last we were rewarded by a long-drawn sigh, and the lids slowly lifted from the dark eyes.

The servant had found some brandy, and I held a little to her lips, motioning her not to speak, but she pushed the glass aside and sat upright.

"It is a bad dream," she said—"only a dream! Say it—*only a dream!*"

"Only a dream," I repeated soothingly—"a bad dream."

She swallowed a little of the brandy and lay back exhausted on the couch, while I followed the servant into the kitchen.

"Where is Mr. Graham?" I demanded sharply.

"I don't know, miss."

"When will he be home?"

"I don't know, miss."

"Has Mrs. Graham been ill long?"

"I don't know, miss."

"Is there anything you do know?" I inquired, my patience worn threadbare.

"No, miss; I don't know nothing."

This statement was so evidently true that I left her aimlessly poking the fire and returned to my patient.

She lay quite still, with closed eyes, so I merely drew a chair near the couch and sat down to wait further developments. I waited a long time. The minutes slipped past, and the room grew dim, for twilight was approaching—the long summer twilight which I usually loved, but whose arrival I dreaded to-day.

At last she stirred, moved restlessly once or twice, then raised her head and looked around the room.

"Where is he?" she said. "Where is he?"

"He has not come home yet, Mrs. Graham," I replied quietly. "No doubt he will be here soon."

She fell back upon her pillows, and instinctively I sprang to her side, but she waved me away and turned her face to the wall.

"It was not a dream," she moaned; "it is true, quite true."

I heard the little servant close the window and light her lamp, and envied her the warmth and brightness of her kitchen, for the room was chilly and fast growing dark.

Finally Mrs. Graham raised herself by a great effort and beckoned to me.

"On the table in my room," she said, speaking with difficulty, "you will find some medicine. Drop it in water—the bottle tells how—and bring it to me. But be quick! It's my heart."

I ran to the little room above and brought the medicine, dropping it with shaking hand, and holding it to her lips that she might swallow it. In a few minutes her breathing grew less labored, and she even smiled faintly.

"Don't be frightened," she whispered. "I am better now. It is all over—I know these attacks."

Little by little her face grew more natural, until at last she ceased to breathe with the short, painful gasp, and even sat upright among the pillows; but it was evident she was still suffering from some shock or distress of mind, for she drew me down beside her, holding my hand with a vise-like grasp, as though she feared I might snatch it away from her.

"Stay with me," she begged. "Don't leave me. I—I cannot stay alone to-night."

So I agreed to stay, and dispatched the maid to the cottage with a

note for Gabrielle, saying simply that Mrs. Graham was alone and not well, and wanted me to spend the night with her.

Shall I ever forget that night? Her first spasmodic attempts at ordinary conversation, her long silences, always followed by wandering to the window and gazing out over the ocean with the hopeless yet expectant air of one who knows it is useless to watch, yet nevertheless continues to do so; and the final dreadful moment when, casting all reserve aside, she flung herself upon her knees beside the couch and prayed that death might come soon and spare her further suffering.

"Oh, Harry," she mourned, "how could you? And I loved you so!"

It was infinitely pitiful, and after a while, when she grew calmer, she told me her story, speaking tenderly of the first few years of her married life and of her husband's great love for her and for the child, and the happiness he brought her.

"Then," she continued, "there came a change. He went away, and for weeks I did not hear from him. I thought he was dead, and I nearly died also, they tell me. At last he came back to me—so loving, so patient with my invalid ways, and so self-reproachful at his own thoughtlessness. He had been yachting, he said; an invitation came at the last moment, and the letter he sent telling me of his plans must have miscarried. Could I ever forgive him?"

"Well, I was only too glad to get him back, and I believed him absolutely. For a while, almost a year, we were very happy again, and I was beginning to forget, when he disappeared again. This time he stayed only two weeks, but when he returned he made no apologies. The water called him, he said, and he must go. He never told me where he went, nor what he did, but he gave up his other business, and yet we seemed to have more money than ever. He went away often and stayed for long periods after that, and for months I would not know where he was. When he came back to me he was always kind, always thoughtful for my comfort, always ready to talk on any subject except the one nearest my heart. But he grew to hate the boy."

"His own child?" I interrupted. "How unnatural!"

"He said I loved the child better than I loved my husband," she said, "but God knows whether that is true or not. At last I became ill again, during one of his absences, and when he returned it was a question whether or not I would live. He was dreadfully shocked and grieved, and on his knees beside my bed he begged me to live for his sake. For his sake—the words sounded wonderfully sweet to my ears, and when he held my hand in both his own and whispered that he would never leave me again, I began to feel a desire to get well.

"He kept his word, too, but this summer he came to me and told

me that the sea was calling him, and he must go. He suggested that I come with him up here, where he could have his boat and come home to me at night, but he would not bring the boy, and it broke my heart to leave him. Now you know why I hate the ocean—my enemy.”

“I understand,” I said, and I thought I did realize a little how distressing it must be to her to be so near it.

“Yes,” she said; “I came here gladly, because he asked it, although I hate the air and the very sight of the ocean. But to-day I found something else. I was mending his coat, trying to keep myself occupied and not think too much, for he went out day before yesterday and I have not seen him since.”

“Yes?” I said, for she paused uncertainly.

“It is not the ocean,” she said brokenly. “That was but an excuse. It is a woman. See here.”

She thrust her hand into the bosom of her dress, and instinctively I knew she would bring forth a small package wrapped in white tissue paper. She opened it, and I saw the blue ribbon and the little soft curl with a strange sense of familiarity. She put her finger under the lock of hair, as Elizabeth had done, and looked at me with speechless misery.

“Perhaps,” I suggested, “there is some mistake.”

“It is pretty, is it not?” she said. “A little, soft ring of yellow hair! Yet when I saw it and—*realized*, my heart stopped beating, and I remember nothing more until I saw you.”

She was talking calmly now—too calmly, I thought, as I looked at her feverishly bright eyes. The hand which touched mine occasionally was hot and dry, and a round red spot in either cheek glowed and paled intermittently.

“I am glad I didn’t know,” she continued; “there are some things one cannot forgive, and I might have spoken bitterly. Now I can always remember that I never said a harsh word to him, even when I was most sorely tried. I’m glad of that—very glad.”

She spoke in the tone of quiet reminiscence in which one reviews one’s past attitude to the dead, after the first poignancy of grief is over.

“But he will come back,” I said. “Think how many times he has left you before.”

“He will not come back.”

The finality of her voice precluded a reply, and after a long silence I suggested that she lie down and try to sleep, and I would do likewise. She agreed docilely enough, and I threw myself upon the bed beside her, and in a few moments was sound asleep. I slept heavily, for I was very tired, but it seemed scarcely a moment until I heard her call me.

“Yes,” I cried, alarmed; “what is it?”

Mrs. Graham, fully dressed and with a lighted candle in her hand, stood beside the bed, a shawl around her shoulders and another over her arm.

"I am going out," she said. "Come with me."

"Going out?" I repeated, parrot-like, being still dazed with sleep.

"Going down to the edge of the water to meet *him*. It is calling me—at last the ocean calls me, and I'm going. Will you come?"

"Wait until morning; we can see nothing in the dark."

"It is dawn," she replied, raising the shade. "At last the night has gone."

Off at the edge of the horizon was a broad streak of pale gray, and, while the stars still shone, they were fading fast.

"Come," she repeated, and like one hypnotized I followed down the stairs and out upon the beach, where the water lapped sullenly, for the tide was low.

We walked along in silence, and I wrapped the shawl closely around me, for I was shivering with a chill within as much as without. When we reached our boat-house she paused on the little slip and stretched out her hands toward the water.

"And another voice is calling,
Oh, it cometh from the sea,
With an undertone of danger—
But there's work for you and me."

She repeated the words almost dreamily.

"It is the message she sent, the woman with yellow hair. I needed you, too, Harry, and I called you, but the voice from the sea was stronger, and I understand. Oh, my dear, I begin to understand!"

The stars were gone now, and a faint red line replaced the dull gray of the horizon. A gull flew close by us with a frightened whirring of white wings, and an enterprising wave slapped sharply against the slip; for the tide was coming in now, and the ocean was rippling with little white-crested waves.

The east grew rosily pink, then glowed brightly golden as out of the water rose a scarlet ball that hung suspended a moment between heaven and earth, then smiled upon the world and flooded it with radiance.

"It is day," said Mrs. Graham solemnly, "and he is coming."

She pointed at a dark object rounding the end of the island, and as it drew nearer I recognized the government boat, with which we had now grown quite familiar. I felt a strange sense of awe and unreality as I watched it approach, almost as though it were a phantom ship and the sparkling ocean the river Styx.

Mrs. Graham spoke but once as the boat drew nearer, stopped, and lowered a rowboat, that headed for the slip.

"I am glad," she said simply, "that he never knew *I* knew; he never liked to hurt me."

There were three men in the little boat, and I recognized two of them, Gordon Bennett and his friend Mr. Blake. I do not think I was surprised to see them there, for I had succumbed to a sort of numbness of intellect wherein nothing could astonish me. So I only walked to the edge of the wharf and looked the question my lips refused to utter.

"You!" said Mr. Bennett slowly. "*You!*"

Again I looked at him interrogatively.

He was on the slip now, holding my hand in his and conveying somehow a feeling that my responsibility was over and the burden transferred to his own shoulders.

"Take her away," he whispered. "We are bringing him home. Take her away."

"Dead?"

His eyes answered, and I moistened my lips before I could articulate again.

"Drowned?" I hazarded, and he turned away, his face clouded with pain.

"Murdered," he muttered. "Knocked on the head like a beast. A coward's blow—from the back. We found him in the water. For God's sake, take her away!"

Cold and shaking with fright, I went to Mrs. Graham and tried to speak, but could only put my arm about her and draw her close to me.

"Come home with me," I managed to say, at last—"home to the cottage. We want you."

But she only stared at me with wide, tearless eyes.

"I must go home," she said, "to *his* home, and get ready for him. They are bringing him back to me, and he has always found me waiting. I have never disappointed him, and this time also I will be ready."

XIII.

I do not wish to speak about the week which followed. Even now I do not like to think about it, although its long days are indelibly photographed upon my mind. I can see Mrs. Graham walking around with her stony calmness, directing everything, and receiving all efforts at sympathy with the same impenetrable air of reserve and the same proud dignity which forbade pity and discouraged intimacy.

Only at the last, as she stood in the door closely veiled and ready for the long journey home, which she insisted upon undertaking alone,

did she relax even a little. Then she drew me to her and kissed me warmly, and I could feel warm tears upon my face.

"Some time," she said, "later on, I will write to you. And some time I will see you again. You were very, very good to me, and I thank you. Good-by."

Thus she passed out of our lives, and we settled down again, a little graver, perhaps, and a little less apt to treat every subject as a joke. Elizabeth said she did not love the ocean as much as formerly, while Gabrielle confessed she often went out of her way to avoid seeing the little house on the shore, now lonely and unoccupied. As for me, I often awoke with a start, thinking I heard Mrs. Graham calling me, and half expecting to find her standing beside my bed, waiting for me to go out with her just as dawn was breaking.

It was then that our friendship for Lady Edith ripened into love. She was so sympathetic, so gentle, and so patient with the strange attitude assumed by poor Mrs. Graham. One could not but admire a woman whose every advance was frigidly repelled, yet made no comment and expressed no surprise, but quietly did all in her power to help a sister woman through the deep waters that engulfed her.

Her charity was extended to Mr. Graham also, and, while no explanation nor excuse seemed possible regarding him, she covered his past with a mantle of silence in effect somewhat resembling the soft powdering of freshly fallen snow upon the mire of the streets.

"Let us not talk about him," she once said gently, when we were discussing the subject. "He is dead. Perhaps he was tempted beyond his strength—who knows? It is not for us to judge."

She spent much time with us at the cottage, and although the strain we all felt more or less was apparent in the pallor of her cheeks and the black circles about her eyes, her quiet cheerfulness never failed, and she was always ready to respond to any appeal for advice or assistance. We grew to depend greatly upon her, and felt as though we had known her always.

Not so Lord Wilfrid. A card left formally at Mrs. Graham's door was the only indication he gave of any knowledge of the deplorable event which had shaken our little community to its foundations, and not even his sister could induce him to do anything more.

"Hang it all!" he said roughly, one evening when she had urged upon him the necessity of at least offering to be of any assistance in his power, "why should I mix myself up in it? The man is dead, and, from all accounts, it seems a good riddance."

"But, Wilfrid dear, remember we knew them before we met them here. It does not seem kind——"

She paused, for he interrupted, with a disagreeable laugh:

"We knew them—yes, so we did. Why should I forget it? I have done all I ever mean to do for him. And don't ask me to go near that house where he lies dead—his wife looks and looks at you with her big solemn eyes, reading your very soul. There are some things even you cannot make me do, and——"

"Wilfrid!"

He stopped abruptly, and with a muttered apology left the veranda. His sister sighed a little as she turned to Gabrielle, who sat next her.

"Poor Wilfrid!" she said. "Only see how nervous he is. He always had this strange aversion to death, and he did not like Mr. Graham—men know men. I fear he is not as strong as I thought, for this sad affair has completely unnerved him. Have you not noticed how badly he looks?"

It was indeed patent that he was far from well. He was sullen and irritable, his complexion had assumed a dull, pasty hue, and his eyes were shift and troubled.

"I believe," remarked Elizabeth that night when we were alone, "that Lord Wilfrid takes some kind of a drug which gives him that queer greenish look."

"Poor Lady Edith!" I said. "I believe she has troubles of her own with him."

"And how bravely she hides them!" added Gabrielle thoughtfully. "Well, it only goes to prove what I have said all along: blood will tell."

But if Lord Wilfrid failed in the ordinary courtesies of humanity, Gordon Bennett did all and more than could have been expected of him, and I soon forgot his scarf-pin with the Sphinx's head, and also the fact that I had seen him trying to force an entrance into our boat-house, which extraordinary proceeding was still unexplained.

So the days passed, and we slowly resumed our ordinary routine, recovering from the shock with the elasticity of youth and health, and quite willing to put the dreadful episode away from us.

There was a ball at the hotel one night, and we all went, glad of the diversion afforded by the lights and music, and pleasantly conscious that our gowns were all that could be desired.

Gordon Bennett and Mr. Blake, as well as many other cottagers, sailed over to participate, and as the floor was good, the music excellent, and men plentiful, we enjoyed ourselves very much indeed.

Mr. Blake danced once with me, but I noticed that his eyes continually followed Lady Edith's graceful figure, again attired in the black gown which afforded such an effective background for her golden hair and white shoulders.

"Is she not lovely?" I inquired, as my glance followed his.

"She is wonderful," he said, almost beneath his breath—"wonderful."

After supper, as I stood for a moment alone by the open door, Lady Edith touched me on the shoulder and beckoned me to join her on the veranda. Her face was very grave, and I observed that her hand was cold and shook a little as she drew me to a chair.

"Elise," she said, with an evident effort, "I am going to pain you, and it breaks my heart to do it."

I looked at her in silence, wondering greatly, but she seemed to find it difficult to continue.

"Have you ever thought," she said at last, "that there is anything strange about Mr. Bennett?"

"Strange?" I repeated. "Strange?"

"Not quite right, I mean. What men call *straight*. Have you ever seen him do anything which seemed to require an explanation? Have you ever asked him a question he could not answer?"

I stared blankly at her, and she resumed slowly:

"You make it very hard for me, yet I must tell you. The man is not suitable for you to know; I warned you once before, but was not certain, so dared not say too much. Wilfrid says (men hear these things) that he is the man the police are after—the smuggler. And, worse still, that he is the thief who took Mrs. Bundy's emeralds."

"Are you sure?" I hardly recognized my own voice.

"Quite sure. Every one will know soon, for his arrest is a matter of but a few days. He is a dangerous character, and has been seen trying to force an entrance to your boat-house with his confederate, this man Blake."

I uttered a smothered ejaculation.

"There is more to come," she said, "and I do not quite know how to tell you. To-night, when you are all here at the ball, these two men intend to force an entrance to your cottage. I know this to be true—in fact, they have already gone."

She paused abruptly and added in a tone of real solicitude:

"Have I hurt you so very much?"

"No," I hastened to reply; "no, of course not. Why should I be hurt? He is nothing to me. But you must prove it; you might be mistaken, you know."

My head was swimming with the sickening sensation often caused by swinging too long, and I scarcely knew what I said, but felt vaguely that I might in this way gain time, and that time was valuable.

"I will prove it," she said, catching up a wrap and handing it to me. "Would you believe me if you saw with your own eyes? Then come with me. You are quite safe—do not be afraid."

I was not afraid, but as I walked by her side through the quiet village and down the familiar little path to our cottage I wondered dimly why she had brought me there, and why, if such a thing were necessary, she had not selected one of the others.

"We have nothing valuable," I said, at last—"nothing. He knows that."

"You have my pearls," she returned; "but of course you have never mentioned them."

I stopped short, horror-struck. What had I not done, by my thoughtless gossiping?

"Oh, but I did!" I cried. "I *did*! I told him about the safe and what was in it."

"Ah!"

It was a short exclamation, pregnant with meaning. Then she turned quickly and took my hand in hers.

"Never mind," she whispered; "it will be all right. Don't worry."

I tried to say something, but she motioned me to be silent, for we were approaching the cottage now, and she stepped softly, as though fearing to disturb some one. At the corner of the house she paused, listened a moment, then beckoned me to come nearer and pointed toward the kitchen.

At the outer door leading into the cellar knelt two figures, men in evening clothes. I did not need the assistance of the moon, which just then emerged triumphant from behind a cloud, for I recognized them at once.

"No use," said Mr. Blake's even voice; "this door seems to be fastened by an iron bar inside. We must try the boat-house again. I suppose the servant is inside."

"Yes," replied Gordon Bennett; "I saw her a moment ago, when she passed the window. I hope we'll have luck with the boat-house this time."

We shrank into the corner of the house, and they passed so close we might have touched them. As they disappeared down the steps leading to the slip, my companion followed them, still holding my hand and drawing me after her.

"Look!" she whispered.

And I again saw the two men before the boat-house, just as I had seen them once before; saw them try the door, and even set their shoulders against it with an ineffectual effort to burst it open. Lady Edith's face appeared very white and haggard in the moonlight, and the light shawl she wore rose and fell swiftly with her quick breath.

"It holds!" she ejaculated. "The door holds!"

It seemed to be a staunch door indeed, for, in spite of repeated

efforts, it stood impregnable, until at last they ceased working over it and retired to the end of the slip, talking earnestly.

"They have given it up," she whispered, and her voice seemed to thrill exultantly. "See, they are going away. They are easily discouraged, are they not?"

It was quite true, they were going away. We saw them step into their little boat and glide into the moonlit water toward the end of the island, which they must round in order to get home.

"You are safe for to-night," she said. "I am almost sorry I told you, for they will not return, and to-morrow they *cannot*. Let us go back to the hotel, and forget it."

I shook my head and watched the little boat, now a mere speck on the sparkling water.

"I am not going back," I said dully. "I do not care to dance. I'm going home. Mary Anne is there, and I shall not be afraid. Will you tell the girls I did not feel well, and came home?"

She put her arm around my waist and pressed her cheek to mine.

"Poor child!" she said. "I understand. I knew you would not go back, and arranged with Wilfrid to bring the others home. He knows all about it, but he will not speak until I see him. I will stay with you."

I would much rather have been alone, but could not be ungrateful enough to say so. I wanted to go to bed, where the darkness would cover my burning head and I could yield to the sobs which rose in my throat and for very pride's sake must now be strangled. I had not told Gabrielle and Elizabeth about what I had seen the night of our dinner party; I had meant to do so, of course, but weakly deferred it, because the telling was painful to me, and I hoped somehow to unravel the mystery and find the explanation I longed for. Then had come Mrs. Graham's trouble, and I had seen much of Gordon Bennett; so much that, little by little, I had put my doubts away from me and trusted the man in spite of everything, because my heart wanted to trust him, and because of something I saw in his eyes when they looked at me.

Lady Edith was very gentle and very tactful when she went back into the cottage with me. She explained to Mary Anne that I had one of my bad headaches and wanted to go quietly to bed. She told her also to bring me a cup of hot tea, and when I resisted followed her into the hall, and I heard a low-voiced conversation, of which I distinguished only the concluding sentences.

"Very well," said Mary Anne, in a tone of sullen remonstrance that surprised me; "very well, I'll make the tea, but I'll give it to 'er meself, so I will. I'll have no hand in——"

"That is quite enough," said Lady Edith sharply. "You will

make the tea and bring it here. I will come out and get it and take it to Miss Elise; she is ill, and cannot have you lumbering about her room."

After all, it was Mary Anne who brought me the tea, pushing the bedroom door open and marching to my side with the manner of one determined to do or die. I drank it, and she went away again, without a glance at Lady Edith, who sat beside me, saying nothing indeed, but occasionally touching my forehead with fingers which were cold rather than cool and now and then trembled slightly. I knew that in spite of her admirable self control the evening had been an exhausting one for her as well as for me.

After a while we heard Gabrielle and Elizabeth come home, and she met them in the hall, telling them I had fallen asleep at last, but had been quite prostrate with a sudden headache, and would no doubt be all right in the morning.

I heard them say good-night and come up-stairs very softly in order not to disturb me. Then the lights went out, the house grew quiet, and I lay there alone with my secret—my *two* secrets, indeed, for I knew why Gordon Bennett looked at me so strangely, and knew also that he was unworthy a woman's love.

So I clinched my hands and fought my fight, and after a while the tumult in my brain ceased, for sleep is merciful and brings with it oblivion to exhausted nature.

XIV.

"ELISE, wake up."

Gabrielle, looking unnaturally tall in her yellow kimono with long-legged storks and large chrysanthemums straggling indiscriminately across it, stood beside my bed—the lighted candle in her hand held at an angle which caused the grease to drip upon my face and materially assist in rousing me.

"What's the matter?" I demanded, sitting indignantly upright. "I'd only just gone to sleep."

"Hush—don't make a noise. There is some one in the house."

"What?"

I was wide enough awake now, and the events of the preceding evening flashed across my mind with unwelcome distinctness.

"At least, we think so. I heard a noise and waked Elizabeth, and we both listened. It was in the dining-room, and oh, Elise——"

"Lady Edith's pearls!" I finished in an awed whisper, adding as an afterthought: "Where is Elizabeth?"

"Gone to wake Mary Anne. Do get up and put on your wrapper; we might as well be prepared."

I have since asked Gabrielle if she thought it unconventional to receive burglars in a *robe de nuit*; at that time, however, I did not question the motive of her command, but reached obediently for my slippers, and was enveloped in my pink kimono when Elizabeth appeared in her blue one.

Elizabeth was very pale and looked as though she had encountered a regiment of ghosts, as she collapsed in a crumpled heap on the foot of my bed.

"She was n't there," she said in a frightened whisper; "her bed had not been touched, and—oh, I'm afraid!"

We all were, for that matter, and huddled close together, listening intently. Mary Anne, a tower of strength in any emergency, had failed us in our hour of need, and we felt weakly incompetent as well as wofully alarmed.

We listened with strained attention and every sense alert, dreading the unknown, yet still more fearful of the silence which enveloped the house like a pall. We heard nothing, however, except the sound of the waves, usually soothing in its regularity, but to-night accompanied with an overpowering sense of loneliness and a realization of our helplessness and complete isolation.

But as the slow moments passed and nothing happened we grew gradually calmer, and even ventured to creep noiselessly into the hall and lean over the banisters, ready for instant flight back to my room at the first suspicion of a movement below—there to barricade the door and insure personal safety if possible. Again we listened, and again nothing happened.

"Would you be afraid to go down-stairs?" suggested Gabrielle, always the most valiant. "It seems all right."

We *were* afraid, and said so emphatically.

"Of course," said Elizabeth, after another period of silence, "we might have been mistaken about the noise. But, then, there's Mary Anne—what of her?"

Gabrielle sat flat upon the floor, mingled relief and dismay in her face.

"That's just it!" she exclaimed. "It was Mary Anne."

"What do you mean?"

"The noise—it was Mary Anne. Don't you see? She has been fooling us about her son; he is still hanging about somewhere, and she goes out at night and meets him, so it is no wonder she was not in her room."

"Why, of course"—Elizabeth accepted the theory without question, while I maintained an uneasy silence. "I'm so relieved—but I'm sorry too. I hate to think she has deceived us again."

Gabrielle snuffed the wick of her candle and rose to the occasion, for, as she said afterward, she felt herself more than equal to Mary Anne, although she might perhaps flunk a masked burglar.

"Now, I'll tell you our best plan," she said decidedly. "We'll go down-stairs and see if she has left a door or window open (as, of course, she must), and then we will lock it and wait until we hear her coming, and then——"

"Well," I inquired, as she paused irresolutely, "what then?"

"Why, then we'll *confront* her."

Gabrielle spoke firmly, and we felt as though the act of confronting must be in the nature of the ancient ordeal of red-hot ploughshares.

"Let us go right down," she continued, "before she has a chance to come in. Both of you get candles and come on."

"I don't quite like it," demurred Elizabeth. "Suppose she brings that man with her? He might not object to three other murders if he thought it necessary."

I got my candle in puzzled silence. Gabrielle's explanation was very probable, and I fervently hoped it might prove to be true, but I had a mental vision of the figures at the door of the boat-house, and my heart sank within me.

"Get your watch," advised Gabrielle, "and your pins and things. I've got all mine in this chamois bag, except the gold beads; they would n't go in, so I'll just carry them. I'm not afraid, but I would rather have my things with me, somehow."

I collected my small store of valuables, and we formed a procession of three and ventured down-stairs, walking softly, as though afraid to disturb some one.

With every step our confidence returned. We tried the front door and found it closed and bolted; the windows in the hall and living-room were securely fastened; the dining-room also appeared impregnable; and when we found the door to the safe tightly closed, I was beyond measure relieved, and almost ready to laugh at my suspicions.

In the kitchen we found the cellar door open, and debated whether we should lock it and thus prevent Mary Anne's return, or wait and greet her in disapproving array.

"Let us listen," suggested Gabrielle, and sat down upon the top step to carry out her suggestion.

Then occurred the accident to which I referred in the very beginning. She held her gold beads in her hand, and somehow managed to break the catch and away they went. We could hear them rolling down into the cellar step by step, and Gabrielle was at first motionless with surprise, then as usual prepared for immediate action.

"I'm going after them," she announced, literally rising to the occasion.

"Down there?" shuddered Elizabeth. "Oh, no! Wait till morning."

"I spent every cent of Cousin Lucy's check on those beads," said Gabrielle, folding her kimono about her and preparing to descend, "and I'm going to pick them up right away. Wait till morning, indeed! You might suppose they were pebbles."

We sighed apprehensively, but prepared to follow our intrepid friend, feeling that we must share whatever fate was in store for her, as well as help collect her property. So we went carefully down the steps, holding our candles well before us.

Those miserable beads had rolled to the most remote places, of course, and we got so interested in looking for them we almost forgot to be afraid.

Suddenly, however, Elizabeth gave a stifled scream, which was more of a gasp, after all, and shrank back against the wall.

"There is some one in here," she whispered. "I know it."

"How do you know?"

Gabrielle tried to speak boldly, but the hand which held the candle shook until a little shower of melted wax was scattered upon the floor.

"I was feeling—under the steps"—Elizabeth found articulation difficult—"when I touched hair—*human* hair."

We gazed at one another in abject terror, unable for the moment to speak or move; then Elizabeth, whose nerves were completely unstrung, swayed suddenly as though she were going to faint.

"I'm afraid," she gasped—"awfully afraid. It *was* hair, and—oh dear! what shall we do?"

She began to sob in a hopeless kind of way, in which I felt much inclined to join, when I heard a suppressed exclamation, followed by a scrambling sound and the simultaneous flash of two dark lanterns, as a man advanced from the back of the cellar, while another appeared from beneath the steps.

Instinctively we drew close together, and when we afterward compared notes found that we had each tried to scream but could not.

"Don't be frightened," said a voice which sounded strangely familiar; "it's only us, Blake and I."

The girls stared with mingled relief and amazement, but I looked the other way, for I felt a curious sensation of personal disgrace, and as though I could not bear to meet their eyes.

"But," said Elizabeth, at last—"but——"

"It is odd, is n't it?" said Mr. Bennett, with a laugh he tried hard to make natural. "I'm—I'm most awfully sorry you happened to come down. We did not want you to know anything about it."

He paused abruptly, conscious that he was floundering badly, and turned to his companion.

"Tell them, Blake," he commanded. "This thing has got to be explained, and, after all, it's your business, not mine."

"Yes," said Gabrielle, in her most high and mighty voice; "it *does* seem to need explaining."

I admired her very much just then, for it is not every woman who can look dignified and imposing when enveloped in a kimono, with a spluttering candle in her hand, and a dearth of stiff petticoats to sustain her moral backbone.

Mr. Blake cast an anxious glance toward the recess from which he had emerged.

"One moment," he said, then disappeared into the darkness, whence we plainly heard a subdued whispering.

"Are there more of you?" demanded Gabrielle, but with rather a forlorn quaver in her voice instead of the note of stern interrogation she had intended.

"It's all right," said Gordon Bennett. "On my honor, Miss Gabrielle, it's all right."

"Your honor!"

I had not intended to speak; the words escaped before I was aware of it. He turned and looked at me steadily, and again I involuntarily averted my eyes.

"On my honor," he repeated.

"Now," said Mr. Blake, returning, "if you will kindly come up-stairs, I am ready to explain, but I fear I must cause you some pain, or at least a shock."

We went up to the living-room, Elizabeth and I very conscious of our dishabille and inclined to shrink into dark corners, Gabrielle stalking majestically on in front with disgust and disapproval written in capital letters across her back, and indignation hanging from her shoulder blades.

"Well?" she said coldly, after a moment's silence.

"First," said Mr. Blake, with a note of calm authority in his voice, "I must ask you to listen to my story without interruptions, and to accept for the time being any statements I may make. Later I shall be in a position to prove them."

"I hope so," murmured Gabrielle, plainly unimpressed.

Mr. Blake handed her a chair with the same careful courtesy which had hitherto marked his intercourse with us, and waited until she was seated before saying anything more. Gabrielle sat rigidly upright, but suddenly remembered that her feet, encased in bedroom slippers, were minus stockings, and therefore drew them quickly under the folds of her kimono, which hasty act was rather refreshing, since it proved her but mortal, after all.

"I do not suppose," he began, in the calm, level tone so irritating

when one's excitement is at fever heat, "you will believe me when I say that Mrs. Bundy's emeralds are in your safe. Please don't take the trouble to deny it, for I know I am speaking the truth.

"Also, I wish to say that they were placed there by the woman you have received and entertained as Lady Edith Campbell, but who is in reality a notorious character and badly wanted by the police."

"I don't believe it."

It was Elizabeth who spoke, and her words were freighted with sincere conviction.

"I did not expect you to. It is true, nevertheless. This woman is known as Nell Simms, and her career has been marvelous. For some years she was—well, associated with a famous criminal named James Kilroy, who gave the police a long, hard chase before his capture. He had many strings to his bow, not the least among them the smuggling of diamonds and other articles none too honestly acquired; since his arrest this woman has directed the business. She is clever—wonderfully clever."

There was sincere, if unwilling, admiration in his tone, and he paused thoughtfully before resuming his story.

"It has been my business this summer to look up this matter of smuggling, and I have followed the history of this woman as closely as I could. After the arrest of her chosen companion she married the man you know as Lord Wilfrid Campbell, who is a well known thief and a member of the small and select band of smugglers, but who is far from being as clever as she. He is also the son of your servant, Mary Anne Brown."

Across my mind rushed the recollection of the conversation I had overheard in the cellar, and the memory of the man's voice, certain inflections of which had haunted me with their familiarity. For some reason, I looked across at Gordon Bennett, only to find him watching me intently, an anxious expression in his blue eyes, where relief was mingled with sympathy. I wondered if he knew what I had been thinking, and immediately looked away again.

"The son of your servant," continued Mr. Blake's even voice, "and a dangerous character—wanted for murder in Montreal. These people, young ladies, have used you for their own purposes. This cottage you live in belongs to them, and you were put here as a buffer to avert suspicion. Your servant was sent here to watch you and drug you when necessary; your boat-house was used to conceal their boats, and your cellar to store their goods. A passage at the back—hidden by the empty dry goods box—leads into the boat-house. With the man's mother as your servant and under their control, it was easy for them to carry on whatever operations they chose, and to baffle the secret service. But your safety, even your lives, were in constant danger."

He paused as though there was more to come which he hardly knew how to say, but Gabrielle interrupted him, starting from her chair and standing tall and erect before him.

"And do you expect us to believe this extraordinary story?" she inquired slowly.

"It is true."

"It is *not* true. We know there are jewels in that safe. Lady Edith put them there after the robbery at the hotel, because she was afraid of losing them. But they are pearls, not emeralds, and to-morrow I will ask her to show them to you."

"I do not wish to see them."

"I do not know, Mr. Blake, what you were doing in our cellar to-night. It seems a very strange place for a guest, but no doubt you can offer some satisfactory explanation of your intentions. We are waiting for it; your unwarrantable attack upon *our friends* hardly seems sufficient reason for your presence here at this hour."

Mr. Blake looked at his watch, then replied very calmly.

"Your friends," he said, with a slight emphasis, "will return here to-night. We were waiting for them. We are sorry, as Mr. Bennett has already said, that you discovered us, for we meant to conduct the thing quietly."

"It is impossible," said Gabrielle. "I—we—why, I know you must be mistaken."

"You can see for yourself," he returned. "It is only necessary for you to step behind the portière. Bennett and I will get behind the curtains in the window seat. I must ask you to allow me to put out the lights."

"I will not do it."

"But, Miss Gabrielle, you really must," interrupted Gordon Bennett quickly. "So much depends upon it! If we are wrong, we will apologize in sackcloth and ashes. Tell her it is the only thing to do, Miss Elizabeth."

We finally agreed, and hid behind the portière at the dining-room door, feeling wretchedly guilty ourselves, as well as disloyal to our absent friends.

I do not know how long we stood there in the dark, but it seemed an age, as I distinctly felt the thumping of my heart and listened with strained attention for a sound from the surrounding darkness.

At last it came. A stealthy step, a subdued rustle of skirts, a whispered word of caution, and we were aware that some one had entered the dining-room and stood so near the sheltering portière that it moved slightly. We could hear a low voice command some one to go to the foot of the stairs and listen for movements above. Then silence again, and a whisper from Mary Anne that everything was quiet.

A faint light appeared through the opening of the portière, and, parting it still further, we saw two figures: one, a man, on his knees at the door of the safe, while the other, a woman, held the lantern. Her back was toward us, but we knew only one person with that wealth of golden hair, slim, graceful figure, and those dazzling white shoulders enhanced by the low-cut black gown. Elizabeth's fingers closed tightly on my arm, and I knew she too had recognized Lady Edith Campbell.

The man bungled at the lock, and she spoke sharply to him, her voice hard and stinging. He muttered something, but she did not answer, for the door of the safe swung open, disclosing the box she had placed there in its wrappings of soft white paper. Eagerly she bent to get it, but as she took it in her hands a whistle blew shrilly, hasty steps approached, and the room suddenly seemed full of people and lights.

The man sprang to his feet with an oath, but his arms were seized by two men in uniform, who in terms more forceful than polite admonished him to keep quiet and make no trouble.

And the woman—Lady Edith? She stood erect, with head flung back and blazing eyes. A scarlet spot flamed in her cheeks, glowing brilliantly at first, then fading to marble whiteness as she looked at the array against her. For a moment she said nothing; then, turning to Mr. Blake, she spoke in an even, mechanical voice.

"I congratulate you upon the success of your *coup*."

He came nearer and held out his hand authoritatively.

"I will relieve you of that box," he said.

"I will not give it to you."

"I should regret to use force with a woman."

But we could bear no more, and with one accord pushed aside the curtain and entered the room.

"It is n't true!" cried Elizabeth, rushing to her side. "Say it is n't true, and we will believe you."

"Even now, in the face of everything, would you believe me?"

"Yes," I said; "we would indeed. It is your word against theirs—why should we not believe you? Only say it is not true. The box is yours, but why did you get it this way? You had only to tell us you wanted it—your own property."

"You hear?" she said, standing tall and erect, her eyes on a level with Mr. Blake's as she looked at him, ignoring his outstretched hand.

"My word against yours, and they believe me—*me!*"

"I should regret to use force," he repeated. "The box, if you please."

"Stop!" said Gabrielle quickly. "Lady Edith, may I take the box? Thank you. Surely it is a simple matter for you to satisfy this man. Let us open it and prove him wrong once for all, and then neither you nor I need ever see him again."

She unwrapped the first layer of paper, then paused uncertainly.

"Tell me they are *yours*," she said in a queer, choked voice—"your mother's pearls—and I will believe you. Only look at me and tell me so."

The great brown eyes looked into Gabrielle's clear hazel ones steadily for a minute perhaps, then faltered; the long lashes drooped upon her cheek, and she turned aside, speechless—self-confessed a thief.

Gabrielle, with a sigh which was almost a sob, handed the box to Mr. Blake. He bowed gravely, removed the cover, and Mrs. Bundy's famous emeralds glittered in their bed of jeweler's cotton. As long as I live I shall hate emeralds, for they can but recall that most painful scene, bringing vividly before me the averted face, the bent golden head, and the drooping figure of our once loved friend.

"Surely," said Gordon Bennett, in a stifled voice, "there is no use in prolonging this scene."

"None whatever," agreed Mr. Blake, making a sign to the officers who held the man I even now think of as Lord Wilfrid.

"I arrest you," said the officer, "for the murder of Harry Graham."

Something flashed in the light, and we heard a sharp click, accompanied by a suppressed scream from Mary Anne.

"Not that!" she cried. "Oh, good Lord! not *that*! Don't put the 'andcuffs on 'im."

"Be quiet," her son said. "Don't you see the game is up?"

She did not heed him, but stood before the officers with raised hand and a certain dignity of carriage which commanded attention in spite of her gingham apron and round red face.

"Aye," she said; "the murder of Mr. Graham. 'E done it—'e struck the blow—but why? Ask the woman beside 'im, 'er with the soft 'ands and the yellow 'air. Ask 'er why he done it. Ain't she 'is wife? Ain't 'e lived and breathed and worked fur 'er ever sence the evil day he fust seen 'er—the day 'e come to me and told me 'e was agoing to take up a trade and live honest and respectable? Wot did she do fur 'im? She smiled on 'im and she coaxed 'im, with 'er sweet voice and pretty ways; she said she could n't live wi'out 'im, and more, too. And she told 'im 'ow rich she was, and 'ow easy she made 'er money—takin' whatever she laid 'er 'ands on, and smuggling jools and sich acrost the border to 'er friends in the States. Wot did she marry 'im fur? She did n't love him——"

The man made a sudden motion, but the officer laid a restraining hand upon his arm, and Mary Anne continued, pouring out the words with a steady stream which admitted of no interruption.

"She wanted somebody to do 'er dirty work, that's why she married 'im, and tired enough of 'im she got, fur all the gold key she gave 'im an' the cuff button which I thought I 'd die when I seen it in yer 'ands,

Miss Elise. Was there a stormy night she did n't send 'im out on the ocean wi' a boat-load fur the other side, carin' not a bit whether 'e ever come back or not? Did she care fur anything but 'erself?

"Don't I know 'ow fur years, ever sence she fust seen 'im, she's made that pore dead man work fur 'er? An honest man 'e was, too, at fust, with a wife and child, but wot did she care? 'E was crazy about 'er, and once I heard 'im say 'e'd foller 'er to purgatory and wuss, and 'e left 'is wife and child whenever she called 'im, which she did wi' a lock o' 'air and some fool verse. She liked 'im, too—liked 'is fine figger and 'andsome face, and when he come around she 'ad smiles and to spare, with nothing left fur Willy but black looks and sharp words. Oh, I know!"

"Will some one stop the woman?" said Mr. Blake helplessly; but Mary Anne had more to say, and went close to her daughter-in-law, addressing her directly.

"When you sent fur 'im this summer," she said, "and 'e come as usual, you did n't like it because he brought 'is wife—pore, pale, homely little thing—so you was extra sweet to 'im nights when you met in the boat-'ouse, and he sailed you out on the sea, you two alone, and my boy here left behind, eatin' 'is 'eart out with love and jealousy. And you made a plan, you two, so 's you could be together alwiz, fur you thought you could n't live apart, you said. So 'e was to leave 'is wife fur good and all and go abroad, and you was to join 'im there, fust lettin' the police in Montreal know how they could git Willy—git 'im fur somethin' 'e done because you told 'im to. But you wanted to close up the bizness 'ere fust, you said, and git the emeralds safely landed, so 's you would be sure of the money they'd bring. And Willy was n't to git a cent, fur you needed it yerself, but 'e thought 'e had 'em, fur you give 'im a box jest like it one night, and started 'im and Mr. Graham off fur the other shore. You never thought, though, when you two was talkin' in the boat-house jest before they sailed, that me and Willy was in the passageway listenin' to you. We 'eard jest 'ow Mr. Graham was to land 'im with the empty box, and sail away immediate, leavin' 'im caught hard and fast. Well you knowed 'e would never peach on you."

She paused and swallowed convulsively.

"So Willy went out in the boat alone with Mr. Graham, and with 'is 'eart black wi' rage and passion. And 'e struck the man, meanin' to stun 'im, per'aps. But 'e killed 'im—'e killed 'im. And I say now, and God in 'eaven knows I'm right, that this woman murdered 'Arry Graham, not my boy—not my boy."

"Officer," said Mr. Blake's quiet voice, "remove the prisoners."

The officers now approached the woman and held the handcuffs toward her, but she shrank away against the wall.

"Not that!" she cried, with the first note of appeal her voice had contained. "Not that! I will go quietly. Not that."

"Then go," Mr. Blake said sternly, "and remember resistance is useless. There are other men outside, and the government boat is at the slip. Go."

She turned once and looked at us, as she walked between the two officers to the front door, and paused uncertainly.

"Good-by," she said very gently. "You would have believed me, and I thank you. I—I am glad to have known you. Please forget me, and—good-by."

The train of her black gown swept the floor as she crossed the hall, but she did not look back again; we heard the door close, and steps cross the veranda, and then Mr. Blake replaced the cover on the glittering emeralds and again wrapped them in soft white paper.

"And this," he said to Gabrielle, "explains our presence in your cellar to-night. I hope you are convinced I spoke the truth."

But Gabrielle was on the couch, her face hidden in the cushions, her dignity a thing of the past.

"Go away," she said in a smothered voice—"go away, and never, never, let me see your face again."

"What have we done?" he inquired, turning to his friend with a puzzled air.

Elizabeth now had the floor, and the mantle of dignity descended upon her.

"I think," she remarked frigidly, "we need not trouble you to stay any longer. We are quite accustomed to being alone—we *prefer* to be alone."

Gordon Bennett turned helplessly to me, but it was now my turn to be haughty and unappeased. Even under the circumstances, I could not let the others distance me in such matters.

"I do not think there is anything more to say, Mr. Bennett," I returned loftily. "I quite agree with my friends."

"It seems," he remarked, turning to Mr. Blake, "as though we might as well go home."

When they reached the door, however, he returned and stood before me, hat in hand, and a very determined aspect about the chin.

"I want to tell you," he said, "that I found the scarf-pin on the slip. It was a sleeve button dropped by the man you call Lord Wilfrid, and the clue Mr. Blake was looking for. I had promised him not to admit to any one where I got it—therefore I lied, as you know. He had it set as a pin, and wished to try the effect on the woman. You know how she gave herself away when she saw it, for you also were watching her. The gold key is the badge of this particular band of smugglers, and they all wear it in various ways. Your servant, Mary Anne, was

more sinned against than sinning, and will be allowed to go free. I know you would wish this."

He paused suggestively, but I made no reply.

"I think that is all," he concluded, "except to say that if I can at any time be of service to you, or if, for any reason, you want to see me, I hope you will let me know. Until then I shall be careful not to intrude."

The hall door slammed with some emphasis, and again we listened to steps crossing the veranda. Then, simultaneously and without restraint, we began to cry, while Mary Anne in the kitchen sobbed heavily.

This did us all good, and when at last we opened the windows and looked out, the ocean sparkled and glittered in the morning sun and the whole world smiled at us just as it had so often done before.

At the point of the island a small, dark object moved swiftly along; we recognized the government boat, and watched it with swimming eyes and trembling lips until it made the turn and disappeared.

Gabrielle pointed to the foam in its wake with a hand that shook slightly.

"There goes Lady Edith," she said; and we looked out over the empty ocean in silence.

XV.

WE were going home. Our trunks were packed and our passage engaged. We told each other we were glad to go, but if the truth were known, we were all very melancholy and wandered around picking up stray last articles in a resigned silence which grew more and more depressing as the afternoon advanced.

"It might have been clear, our last day," observed Elizabeth, flattening her nose against the window pane as she peered out into the gray drizzle which harmonized so well with our state of mind.

"It is like our first week on the island," replied Gabrielle. "Do you remember how we went out into the rain and found the cottage? It seems a thousand years ago."

"Dear little house!" said Elizabeth, almost tearfully. "I can't help loving it. After all, it *was* nice while it lasted."

We echoed her sigh; this was our last day, and it was raining. The ocean looked gray and angry, and the wind blew so mournfully that at last Gabrielle cast herself face downward upon her bed and refused to be comforted.

It was then I announced my intention of walking to the village, to get any mail which might have accumulated in the two days since we had visited the post-office. So I got my rain-coat and umbrella, and as I fastened my veil I heard a gloomy voice from the next room.

"What have I done with my life? When I get back to Washington I intend to make a fresh start. I will read to the blind, and——"

Smothering the first inclination to laugh which I had had for some days, I left Elizabeth to struggle with the blue devils which had got possession of her *alter ego*, and went up to the village.

I was glad I went, for, heavy though the atmosphere undoubtedly was, it seemed less depressing than our pretty little rooms, and, besides, I wanted to be alone. So I got the mail, and wandered slowly back along the familiar path, with my heart strangely heavy and a very suspicious lump in my throat, which made me thankful I was not obliged to talk to any one.

When I got to the steps leading down to our little slip I paused and looked wistfully toward it, but the fog was so thick I could see nothing.

"I'm going down," I remarked decidedly, as though some one had objected.

And I went down, impelled by some irresistible force. The boat-house door stood wide open now, and only the two little boats inside showed traces of its recent occupancy. I looked at them, vaguely wondering how they could seem so calm and unconcerned when so much of importance had been connected with them, and then walked to the end of the slip and sat dejectedly down upon the raised ledge, my dripping umbrella over my shoulder and my damp skirts falling abjectly about me. I am very sure that never before or since have I looked so forlorn or so utterly friendless.

I felt friendless, too, and as though nobody wanted me, and I *wanted* to be wanted, although I was not just sure by whom. So I sat, cold and miserable, on the ledge, and to this day I don't know whether the moisture on my face came from the clouds above or my own two eyes, but I am inclined to believe it was a combination, and I took solid comfort in the fact that I was exceedingly uncomfortable and would probably catch a heavy cold.

I sat with my face turned toward the ocean, so I did not see a figure follow me down the steps, cross the slip, and stand directly behind me, quite obscured by my umbrella, which I held very loosely indeed until a sudden puff of wind almost wrenched it away from me.

I clutched at the handle in an incompetent sort of way, and tried to lower it, since it was difficult to hold and I was already very wet, but the catch would not work, and I struggled vainly with it until a strong brown hand quietly closed over mine and I recognized the signet ring with the Bennett crest.

"Allow me," he remarked, just as he had said to Gabrielle when she was fishing for the comb.

I could only stare dumbly, all at once acutely conscious of my

dragged appearance. He lowered the umbrella and calmly seated himself upon the ledge beside me, raising his own as he did so.

"This," he said, adjusting it at an angle which let cold water drip down my neck, "will shield us both."

I wriggled ungratefully, and tried to assume a careless air.

"I'm not much shielded," I replied, "but, then, I did not ask to be."

"But you wanted to?"

"Where did you come from?"

I was not prepared to answer his question, so parried it by another.

"From the village. I saw you there, and followed humbly in the rear, as a culprit should. But, on my soul, I don't know what I've done, except——"

"Don't," I interrupted; "I do not wish to talk about it."

"Well, I won't. But you might admit you were just a little unreasonable that night. We really meant well."

"We are going away," I said abruptly.

"I know."

"And we're never coming back any more."

"Oh, yes, you are—next summer."

"Never any more."

"I am coming back next summer," he said positively, "but not by myself, I hope. My island is a very jolly little place, but it's a bit lonely, even when a fellow wants to rest after his winter's work."

"What is your work?" I inquired, suddenly conscious that none of us knew or had cared to ask.

"Well, I draw a bit sometimes, just enough to keep the jam-pot full, since my parents insured my bread and butter."

I sat up straight with surprise and pushed aside the umbrella.

"Not Bennett, the illustrator?" I exclaimed.

"Why not, please?"

"Well!" I gasped, quite overcome, for I knew and loved his illustrations in the leading magazines, and had read everything about him I could lay my hands upon. "And to think we first thought you insane, and I even doubted your honesty, while all the time you were——"

"A very spoiled, lazy fellow," he interrupted gravely, "and a lonely fellow, too, for success like mine brings many acquaintances and few friends."

"You can always have Mr. Blake," I suggested pointedly, as he paused.

"Blake is all very well in his place," he returned, shifting the umbrella to his left hand and feeling abstractedly in his pocket, "but I want something lots better, and I think I've found my heart's desire. I want you to see her picture."

"So you are going to be married?"

I scarcely recognized my own voice, it sounded so strained and mechanical.

"I truly hope so, but I have not ventured to ask her yet. Will you look at the picture and tell me whether you think she will be kind? You see, I'm by no means certain, and it is very vital to me."

"How can I tell?" I began petulantly, then paused abruptly, for it was *our* picture he laid upon my lap, the one he had so shamelessly abstracted from Gabrielle's shopping bag. So I stared wide-eyed and speechless, with a clutching at my heart I could not understand. Was it Gabrielle or Elizabeth?

"The one in the middle," he said gently. "Elise—will she be kind?"

And then I realized he was not speaking of some remote, shadowy paragon of a girl, but of me—just as I was, in my old rain-coat and dripping hat. I realized something else, too, for when I looked up and met his eyes, I tried to speak, but could not, because my heart was too full. But words were quite unnecessary, for we were looking into each other's eyes, and of course we understood.

"And now," he remarked, some time later, when we were brought back to earth, or rather to water, by the fine soft drizzle changing into a brisk shower—"and now you really must go in, or you will have pneumonia, and then what should I do? But first it's up to me to return that side-comb. I said I'd do it in my own way, you know, so I'm going to put it in myself."

"But not now. Think how wet and horrid my hair must be."

And then—well, I don't believe it is necessary for me to say any more. Things which are very sweet and natural, and often form cherished memories, are apt to look very different in cold hard print, and, moreover, what would become of the little shrine we erected for ourselves that rainy afternoon if I took the world into our confidence and allowed it to be desecrated by the critical outsider?

XVI.

MARY ANNE made us our farewell fire that night, almost putting it out with the tears she shed as she arranged the driftwood. For Mary Anne was a veritable Niobe these last days, poor soul, and every spare moment was given over to weeping. She was, she told us as she struck the match, going home to England, where she hoped she might die happy some day, if only she could learn to forget. She could live on her savings, and if not, work was always to be had when one looked for it. And she hung lovingly about us, too, with protestations of affection and regret at all that had happened.

"And I never, never drugged you but the once," she reiterated—"in the chocolate, you know. I would n't do it for neither of 'em, and very 'ard they thought of me for it, too; but 'ow could I go for to do it and you trustin' me, even when you 'eard me and Willy talkin' in the cellar? And I brought you the tea myself that last night, Miss Elise, when she wanted to give it to you 'erself and put a powder in it to send you to sleep; but I would n't let 'er, for all she was my son's wife. Oh, Willy, Willy!"

We got rid of her after a while, and settled down for our last evening, while the fire burned with its green, blue, lavender, and red lights, wherein I now found wonderful pictures and not so very remote either, and the ocean rolled monotonously outside.

In the first long silence I told the girls about it—glad that the lamp was not lighted, and glad also that the firelight did not shine upon my face. Well, they were very, very nice, and considerate enough to ask very few searching questions—although they have since told me they were consumed with the desire to do so.

So the evening passed, and at last we went unwillingly up-stairs, careful not to mention that it was our last night in the little cottage, which, in spite of everything, we still loved.

I lay broad awake for a long time, listening to the washing of the waves and thinking the thoughts that come to a girl but once in a lifetime, when I heard a low voice from the next room, and knew the others were wakeful also.

"Were you surprised, Elizabeth?"

"Yes, I certainly was"—the emphasis in Elizabeth's tone left no room for doubt. "Somehow, I never associated Elise with marriage—or with men either, for that matter."

"Neither did I. She'll never be the same again, but oh, Elizabeth, if it had been *you*, what should I have done?"

"And I was just lying here thinking how dreadful it would have been if it had happened to *you*. So long as we have each other, nothing else matters."

"No, nothing else matters. I hope she'll be very happy, but Elise is—well, she's *Elise*, and I can't help wondering how she is going to like married life."

And I wonder, too, for, after all, it is always like starting a very small ship across a very broad ocean. But I am not afraid of the voyage, for Gordon is going with me, and we have engaged a pilot whose name is spelled with four letters; he is warranted to steer a safe course through every sort of weather, and we both believe he will bring us safe into port at last.

PAT CRONIN and the FORETELLIN' LADY

by *ELLIS PARKER BUTLER*



ONCE there lived in Ireland, when all of us was young, a lady that had the gift of foretellin' what would come to pass, and the knowledge of all kinds of magic, both black and white and mixed; but trade was poor with her, for she could foretell only the unlucky things, and not the good ones, and that is a poor way to build up a foretellin' business, as many told her.

But over behind the hill lived one man that was not afraid of the worst she could foretell, for he was married to Maggie Murphy, and it was a saying in that part of the country that any one that dared to marry Maggie Murphy would be afraid of nothing whatever, and that whatever happened he would be glad of it.

So Pat Cronin—and that was the poor fellow's name—went to the foretellin' lady to find out what she could foretell, him having been married to Maggie Murphy going on a month and feeling that a foretell of sudden death would be the best news she could foretell to him, sudden death being quicker than the kind he was getting at the end of a broom.

The foretellin' lady, trade being so poor with her, was glad to see him, and gave him the best seat she had, which was all the same with the worst, there being only one, and took his hand and immediately began to weep tears as big as chestnuts.

"Wurroo!" she cries. "I see be th' lines of yer palm ye are Maggie Murphy's man, and 'tis bad luck ye have ahead of ye."

"I had an intimation of th' same mesilf, ma'am," says Pat, no bit scared; "go on, ma'am, and tell me the truth of it."

"Ye will live t' be so old ye will have t' begin countin' yer years at one again," says she.

"'Tis sad," says Pat; "but go on and tell me the bad end of it."

"Yer lovin' wife," says she, "will accompany ye th' whole way," says she.

"Now I know the worst," says he, "let me take me hat and go home."

"Wait a bit," says she; "the worst is yet to come, and ye get it all for th' one paymint, so ye may as well list t' it."

"Go on wid it," says Pat, with a grin; "for after what ye have told me, anything worse will be something better."

"Well, then," says the foretellin' lady, "I see by the lines of yer palm that ye will have as many children as ye have fingers and toes."

At that Pat Cronin fell into a dead faint, and it was twenty-four hours before he came to himself. And when they brought him to, he was mad, for he said they were the only happy hours he had had since he married Maggie Murphy. But, finding himself himself again, he put on his hat and went over the hill.

When Pat, with the tears streaming down his face, told Maggie the words of the foretellin' lady, she was glad, for she was that fond of children!

"Praise be!" she said. "'Twill be a grand family we will be havin', Pat, wid as many as ye have fingers and toes, for ye have five fingers on one hand and five on the next, and five toes on each foot, and, whether ye add or multiply or divide, 'tis twinty it makes."

"I was always the unlucky creature," says Pat, who liked children no better than a pig likes a ring in its nose.

"'Twill be a grand thing t' have twinty sons and darters t' care for me whin I'm old," says Maggie.

"We be young yet," says Pat, without a smile; "'twill be long before we're old, and twinty is a big number."

"Th' first would likely be a thumb," says Maggie, "and a boy, and th' name fer him will be Patrick, for I will have him christened nothin' else but after his father."

"Bad cess t' him!" says Pat.

"And th' next would be a girrl, belike," says Maggie, "and she will be christened Mary, after me mother."

"Say no more," said Pat hopelessly; "mebby th' foretell will not come true."

"And th' next will be Larry," says Maggie, "afther me own dad, bless his soul."

"I was born on a Friday," says Pat, "and th' bad luck follies me."

"Don't ye think Bridget w'u'd be a fine name for th' next girrl?" asks Maggie, quite cheerful.

"Ten fingers I have," says Pat, with a sigh, "and not a duck

in th' worl'd that has any! And ten toes I have, and a horse has but one on each foot!"

"That's four," says Maggie—meaning the children she had found names for, and not the number of toes a horse has—"and five," she says, counting them off on her fingers, "will be Michael, and six will be Anne, and seven will be Terry, and eight will be Maggie, and nine will be Dennis, and tin will be Lizzie, and that's all th' fingers."

"'Tis plinty," says Pat, "and any man that wants more is a born fool."

"And for the toes," says Maggie, as pleased as a boy in pig-killing time, "elivin will be Garry, and twilve will be Gerty, and thirteenth will be John——"

"Thirteenth is an unlucky number," says Pat, "but twinty is worse."

"And fourteen will be Susan," says Maggie, "and fifteen will be James, and sixteen will be Dora, and sivinteen will be Mark, and eighteen will be Cora, and nineteen will be Luke, and twinty will be Maria, and——"

"Sthop!" says Pat. "Thank th' saints I have no more toes, and 'tis temptin' me to murder ye will be if ye go beyant twinty! Twinty is enough, and some over, and some to spare, and more yet."

It was plain to see he was not pleased with the foretell the foretellin' lady had foretold for him, but Maggie gave him no peace with her always saying over the names lest she forget them. She would sit on the three-legged stool at the door of the hut any time of day in her bare feet, as is the way in that county, counting off the names on her fingers and toes lest she forget them or how they went in order. But forget them she did not, nor the order in which they came, for it was easy to remember that one thumb was little Patrick, and the other was little Anne, and that one great toe was for little Garry and the other for little Dora, and with them to start from it was as easy as a b c.

She would say them over and over, time and again: "Patrick, Mary, Larry, Bridget, Michael, Anne, Terry, Maggie, Dennis, Lizzie, Garry, Gerty, John, Susan, James, Dora, Mark, Cora, Luke, Maria," for all the world as if she was telling her beads, so that people used to come over the hill to hear her, and Pat learned the names by heart, too, whether he wanted to or not.

The hate of it all was so to him that he came to the pass-where he could not bear to see his fingers and toes, and took to wearing shoes in midsummer, which was a thing unheard of in that part, and at last he wore his mittens all the time and slept in his brogans, lest he should awaken in the night and see his toes. And if, by chance,

he hit his thumb with a hammer—for the mittens made him a bit unhandy at his trade, which was that of a carpenter—he was glad, and said, "That's one I owe you, Anne," or, "Take that, bad luck t' ye, Pat!" And 'twas the same when he stubbed his toes, for he rejoiced at the bump it gave little Garry or little Dora. He had lost all affection for his fingers and toes, because of the bad luck they were going to bring to him, and that is a sad state to be in, as any one knows, and cruel hard on the fingers and toes, which work hard all day for one and ask nothing but a bit of affection now and then.

So one day the thumb of his left hand got tired of the way things were going, and spoke to the four fingers that stood alongside of it, and the first chance they got they got underneath the saw that Pat was using and got sawed off.

"'Twill serve him right," they said; but they did not know the true feelings of Pat Cronin, for when he saw his hand he gave one great shout and began to dance a jig.

"Hooroo!" he shouted. "Th' luck has turned, and 'tis a glad day for Pat Cronin! There goes Anne and Terry and little Maggie and Dennis and Lizzie, and there be but fifteen left!" and with that he ran off home to tell the news to Maggie, knowing it would disappoint her.

It was sad news indeed to Maggie, and she that fond of children! And she wept for five days, so that folks came over the hill to see her weep; but as for Pat Cronin, he was wild with joy, and quit being a carpenter, and went to work for Phelim Casey, who had a saw-mill, with a buzz-saw in it.

'Tis wonderful what bad luck some folks can have around a saw-mill! 'Twas full a year before Pat Cronin was successful in getting his right foot in the saw, but 'twas a beautiful job the saw did when he got it there, and he had no complaint to make, for it deducted Garry and Gerty and John and Susan and James as clean and nice as if they had never been.

When Pat got home Maggie was that angry with him she could not speak, for it is a terrible thing for one that is that fond of children to lose five at a clip, but she was able to make motions if she could not speak, and those she made had an emphasis at the end of them, and every time Pat's head happened to be right under the emphasis, which she used a broom to make plain, so that he was glad to leave her alone with her sorrow.

She would hear no more of his going back to the saw-mill after that, and kept him about the hut every minute of the day, so that she could keep an eye on all that was left of the children that the foretelling lady had foretold, from little Patrick, who was a thumb, to little Maria, who was the little toe on his left foot, and she cherished

them as if she was a manicure lady with only one customer and no chance of another. Day by day she made him sit by her side as she went about the cottage, with his one good hand laid out flat on the table and his one good foot propped up on a stool in plain view. It was not hard work except for the temper it aroused in her to see him sitting there doing nothing, while she did not dare to let him out of her sight, but every day her temper got worse and more of it, and at last she gave it a little ease by throwing a flat-iron at him, which would have done no harm had her aim not been upset by her anger, so that she missed his head and the iron came down and mashed little Patrick and Mary and Larry and Bridget and Michael.

Sure, that was one joke Pat had on Maggie, and 'twould have done you good to have heard him laugh when the surgeon came and cut off his four fingers and his thumb, one at a time. And Maggie that put out about it she could not say one word! When the surgeon finished the job Pat was that tickled he asked him to stay and take a cup of tea, and while Maggie was preparing it Pat sought to inveigle the surgeon to finish the job and remove the toes that stood for Dora and Mark and Cora and Luke and Maria, but the surgeon was that fond of children he would not do it.

Then times got worse for Pat Cronin and Maggie, for a man with no fingers and only five toes to his name is not such a good worker as one with more, and they were hard put to it to keep the pot on the fire, till Pat learned the art of knitting with his toes, and that was not such a good kind of work either, for, no matter how handy a man is with his toes, it is hard to manage three needles and turn a heel nicely with only one foot. It took the two hands of Maggie continually picking up the stitches Pat dropped, and at the end of a year he had but one stocking done, and that a half hose, which no one wears in those parts. So as there seemed to be but poor chances of laying by a million dollars in the old country, they packed up everything they owned but the pig, and started for America.

But first Pat would go to say good by to the foretelling lady, for he had not seen her this long time, and he wanted to crow over her about the way he had squeezed down her foretell, and as a parting gift she foretold once more for him, and it was hard words she had for him, for she said he would go to America and become a public man, and what character he had would be ruined, but that did not worry him, for he had not much.

"Before I go," says he, "tell me, has the foretell changed any, that ye give me th' long time back?"

"It has not," says she. "It is the same as it was. Ye will have

as many children as ye have fingers and toes," says she, "for nothin' can change a foretell that is once foretold."

With that Pat thanked her kindly and went back to his cabin, limping a bit, because he had but five toes to walk on, and Maggie met him there.

"Whist!" she said, "we will take no more chances, and I have here a box to nail up your foot in, so that it may go safe to Ameriky, and no harm come to little Dora and Mark and Cora and Luke and Maria;" and with that she brought forth a fine box, just large enough to hold his foot, and made him put his foot in it, and she nailed the lid on, but when she saw him smiling she knew there was something wrong, and she pried the lid off, and, behold you, in nailing it on she had spoiled two more of his toes, so that the surgeon had to come and amputate little Luke and Maria.

When the job was done there was nothing left to do but to go over the hill and say farewell to those that were staying behind, and it was sad enough, and did more to bring Pat and Maggie together than anything in the world, so that they left the old country in an armed truce toward each other, like other married people, and they agreed that it would be a lonely place in the new world, and that they would be glad to have little Dora and Mark and Cora. The more Pat Cronin thought about it, the gladder he was that he had three toes left, and he took good care of them all the way across, and Maggie was pleased to see the change in him, and thought it was the sea air, which was much fresher than that of their cabin had been and had less to remind one of the pig.

As soon as they reached New York Pat set up in business as a public man and applied for a job as a millionaire, and laid his character away, and all seemed going well, and Maggie was number four hundred and one in the Four Hundred, and had the offer of the first vacant place in the three hundreds, when one day she came running to him in tears.

"Pat," says she, "and do you remember the foretell the foretelling woman foretold to you?"

"Sure I do," he says. "Could I forget it?"

"Well," she says, "how many fingers and toes have ye got left?"

"I dunno," he says; "for I have forgot, I have been so busy."

"Count thim," she says, "for 'tis important I sh'u'd know."

She sat down on the Louis XV sofa, the name of which was not sofa, and looked at him through her lorgnette while he counted.

"Wan—two—t'ree," he counted, "and that is all I have left."

At that Mrs. Cronin looked pained and shocked, and shook her head sadly.

"Alas!" she said, "'twill never do at all. T'ree children is an outrageous large family, and not at all what folks in Ameriky has. W'u'd ye be havin' ev'ry wan think we are but ignorant foreigners, Pat?"

"I would not," says he; "I would do as th' Americans do, and be as th' Americans be. What is it you w'u'd be havin' me do, Marguerite?"

"T' save th' honor and glory of th' family," says she, "and t' prevent ridicule fallin' upon us, ye must remove wan of yer toes, Pat."

"For why?" says he.

"Because of the foretell as foretold by th' foretellin' lady," says she, "that says ye will have as many children as ye have fingers and toes."

"But I will have but two left," says he sadly.

"It seems t' be th' custom," says she.

And with that Pat got the carving knife, and then there were only little Mark and little Cora left of all his twenty fingers and toes.



THE THOUGHT OF YOU

BY MARY BYERLEY

THE thought of you is as a morning rose,
 Full-petalled, crowned with velvet mistiness;
 Trail past it winds, in lingering caress,
 The Sun its friend,—bees, dew, its dearest foes.
 And I would be the Sun, the wind, the dew,
 If only for the wish of nearing you.

The thought of you is as a noonday sound
 Of clear-toned trumpet, strong in wonderment,
 That shakes the echoing crags of discontent
 Into sweet fairy whisperings, music-bound.
 And I would be the craggy hillside, too,
 Rent with eternal echoing tones of you.

The thought of you is as a star at eve,
 Far-shining o'er the marge of some still lake;
 Peace, perfect peace, must follow in the wake
 Its tender glimmerings on the waters cleave;
 And I would be the perfect lake at even
 If you, dear star, would make my heart your heaven.

THE TOO-TRAVELLED KINGS

The third in the series of humorous sketches of neighborhood types, "On Our Street"

By Marion Hill

THEY took the large house at the end of the street—the house with a carriage drive and barn—which had been empty several months, awaiting a tenant of sufficient means, for the rent was high.

The Kings were an imposing looking family, all well gowned, big-boned, deep-voiced, handsome, and arrogant. It sums them up completely to say that they were the kind of people that you do not quite like, and that you yet do more for than for people that you like far better. Everything about them bore itself to the best advantage. Their furniture looked dignified even when dumped in a heap on the sidewalk in the broad glare of the sun. That is usually a trying position for one's household gods, when a scratch on the Lares looms up like a blight, a chip out of the Penates yawns wide as a chasm, and streaks, spots, and stains avow themselves with shameless publicity. But the Kings' things stood the strain more than creditably. At the time that the new people were moving in, we older residents had to go a great deal to our front doors, to look in our letter boxes or to snip our plants, and we happened to see pretty much all of the process.

Apparently, it did not take the Kings the whole of a day to get entirely settled. They all had the gift of being able successfully to order other people about. From "little Madison" (as they called him, though a boy of twelve, and not little, either), a big-boned, well dressed, handsome, arrogant lad, up to "Miss Edith," the big-boned, handsome, stylish, arrogant eldest daughter, they possessed executive ability to an extraordinary degree; and out of the two movers, their one maid, and the extra woman hired to scrub paint, they exacted an astonishing amount of work. They themselves never appeared to lift a finger. The afternoon of the very day they moved in, they sat, immaculately dressed, on their front porch, which was already carpeted and palm-decked. That is the time when other movers, even the cleverest, are fishing the ham-bone out of a silk hat, and endeavoring to boil water over a candle. Of course very rich people can do any-

thing, but we knew that the Kings could not be so awfully rich, or they would not choose to live upon our street. Our street is well enough, and is self-respecting and pretty, but not even the most riotous imagination could class it as a wealthy one. Some of us do our own work—"for the exercise," we explain; and those who keep a maid would deem it extravagant to hire extra help to wash paint. We *knew* the Kings could not have so much more than the rest of us, and it chafed us somewhat to notice how very much better than we they managed with what they *did* have, and how aristocratically free from homely duties they were able to keep themselves.

They allowed us to become acquainted with them without loss of time. By the end of the week, the Kings passed up the street bowing right and left with a half-humorous but wholly condescending affability. We put two and two together and came to the sound conclusion that the Kings had moved around so much that they had learned to a nicety the entire science of becoming known. They were an organized band of friend-hunters. The adult Kings stalked us from the front, and little Madison rounded us up from the rear, scaling our back fences and taking domineering possession of our yards and children. The latter he used insistently to invite over to *his* house to see *his* toys. And they went, and had a very good time, too, for Mrs. King welcomed them cordially and gave them toothsome things to eat. Then they came home and told us. The second daughter, Isabel, joined the choir of the biggest church, Miss Edith joined the altar chapter, Mrs. King called on the rector's wife and joined the sewing guild, while the oldest boy, Oscar, became a member of the Y. M. C. A. Finally, all of them joined the library and subscribed to a lecture course. Thus were lanes religious and literary opened to them. Then, little Madison took piano lessons, Miss Edith took painting on china, Isabel took singing, and Oscar volunteered to instruct a class in an art club. Thus they furnished themselves with pleasant by-ways into the world artistic and musical. Mr. King, the biggest-boned, best dressed, handsomest, and most arrogant of the lot, joined a business club. In two weeks' time the Kings knew everybody worth knowing in town. Give them a man's name and they could tell you his initials, his mother's maiden name, his business, his office address, his telephone number, and his income, real and reputed.

Of course, since the true flavor of friendships and acquaintanceships is brought about only by the mellowing influences of leisure and growth, the rapid ripening indulged in by the Kings was marked by a tinge of decided tartness. They were forced to measure calls from a standpoint of duty, not kindness, and woe betide any neighbor who was not as prompt and punctual as the social code advises. "Why, how do you do, Mrs. So-and-so? I was beginning to fear we were

never to have this *pleasure!*" is the critical greeting which stabbed many a dilatory caller—not uttered laughingly, either, but with grave hauteur. Oh, the Kings knew their worth, and exacted its full tribute. Their self-appreciation was magnificent. "Just mention my name and say I sent you," was their way of recommending the tradesperson whom they patronized. It made no difference that *we* had been trading there already a quarter of a century, and *they* but two weeks; they ineffably felt that a fortnight of King outweighed, as an advertisement, an eternity of commoner clay.

People who never stay long in one place are forced to blow their own horn. There is no one to do it for them. So we heard a great deal about Miss Edith's remarkable contralto voice, Isabel's winning domesticity, Oscar's estimable Christianity, and little Madison's affectionate temperament. We learned, too, that Mr. King's patent—which kept him and them travelling—was the outcome of colossal intellect and superhuman constructiveness (though to most of us, even after detailed explanation, it seemed merely to involve a kink in the thread of a screw), and we learned that were it not for the fact that his honesty matched in immensity the dishonesty of high officials, "who might be mentioned," but who never were, Mr. King would be occupying a mansion of his own instead of confining his modest wants within a rented house.

It behooved us to lose no time in getting to that rented house with something nice to eat if any of the Kings took to their beds, else we were sure to hear that by getting ahead of us somebody else had manifested the true human sympathy which we, by our tardiness, had proved was our sad lack. Not that this last was *said*. But the inference was strong in Mrs. King's deep voice as she remarked meaningly: "Ah, illness is the touchstone of sincerity. By their ready sympathy, we learn who are really our friends!"

The thread of the Kings' screw had drawn them all over the United States, from northern Maine to Southern California, from Puget Sound to Chesapeake Bay. It had sent them up the Mississippi River and down the Ohio; there was no big town apparently that they had not lived in for a year or so, and always—it was to be inferred—as its special ornament and pride. They discreetly dropped from their minds the idea that they *had* to travel, and adopted their itineracy as a moral virtue, with the cognate suggestion that those who had not travelled as widely as they were purposely remiss in requirements befitting Christian citizenship. "Never been to Seattle? Is it possible!" one of them would exclaim, almost scandalized. Or Duluth, or San Antonio, or Ragged Dan's Canyon, as the case might be. We did not very much object to hearing about other places, but we *did* squirm at the Kings' undisguised belief that each and every one of

them was so infinitely better than the town *we* were in. Not only were our stores meaner, our streets narrower and dirtier, our schools less advanced, our society less select, our winters colder, and our summers hotter, than in some other place they had favored by their sojourn there; but our sun never set as splendidly as it did behind the Golden Gate, nor did our moon rise as calmly and beautifully as it did over the Tennessee Mountains, nor did our stars shine as grandly as they were wont to shine in the sky above the shores of Lake Tahoe. Everything we owned was several chips shy of what it should be. We could not deny the charges, for we had never been to any of the other places. There is really no reason why one should feel personally responsible for the defects of one's home town, but, none the less, one does, and the Kings made us feel that we had been criminally slothful in looking after things—sun, moon, and stars included.

It must be admitted that the Kings themselves were never criminally slothful about anything. They knew their duty to others quite as well as they knew the duty of others to them. When Mrs. Heriot's Katy was taken with fever, Mrs. King, with a bowl of broth, arrived at Katy's bedside as soon as the doctor did. But afterwards Mrs. Heriot was forced thoroughly to repay the obligation. Upon that over-taxed little woman, young Madison was foisted whenever the older Kings wished to spend an evening out. "After all we have done for the Heriots, they ought to be very glad to do a trifle for us in return," said Mrs. King; and her tone was of one who confers a big favor. We used to shudder with dismay whenever the Kings descended upon us with a kindness. Of course we were willing to repay, but we had a perhaps selfish inclination to do it in our own way—which the Kings never permitted. We kept finding ourselves in debt to them, too, when we never dreamed of it. For instance, if we happened there at lunch-time and took a bite of the Kings' pie, we were sure to hear of it afterwards from Mrs. King: she had "entertained" us at "luncheon." Her tone of voice and bountiful manner made it sound as grand as if we had begun with bouillon and gone on to finger-bowls. It afflicted us with nervous chills, too, for the remark was always made to us after we had given a little dinner party and had failed to include even a single, solitary King.

They stayed in our town a year, and when they moved away we were kept so busy helping them that we had not time to think whether we were sorry or not. It is said that there are gains for all our losses, so, perhaps, remembered from a distance, our sunsets have taken on a proper luster, and our moon and stars have come nearer to the scratch.

THE FIGHTING DEATH

By Will Levington Comfort

Author of "The Fortress"

THE elder Crowley cleared his throat with the sound of a ripping sail. His stenographer reached for her pad.

"Colonel Mat Glawm, Volunteer Cavalry, San Anton', Texas," he dictated. "Hullo, Mat! You'll have to take Birdie with you along to them Islands. Birdie's my son and junior partner. I can't find any good in him. Here's hopin' you can! Ride the cuticle off him, Mat. He's not vicious, but an art-loon and book-batty. Soft as rain-water. All head, like a cocoa-palm. Good luck. Wire me to send him on. Yours solid, Jack Crowley."

The old man considered a moment; then ordered the above to be telegraphed instead of mailed. Two days afterward, he received this answer:

We're off to 'Frisco to embark. Have raw material meet us there.

About this time the son and junior partner entered the office. Kennan Crowley, elected shortly to lose cuticle, was slim, high-gear'd, and stoop-shouldered. His face was pale, kind, and spectacled.

"Father," said he, "since our talk about my helplessness in the office here, I have taken steps to secure some more congenial way of spending my time. I have to report that Temple College has just offered me one of the humbler chairs of geology. I am minded to accept. It's a beginning, and will put me in the arena of educational work."

"Turn it down!" the elder remarked, his black eyes dancing under their thatch of gray. "I've got a better offer for you—a seat in the saddle, college of Mat Glawm, endowed by your Uncle Samuel. This will stick you feet first into the rippin' arena of war!"

"I have always favored breadth of culture, father," the young man declared; "but if it will please you to have me enter the field of martial endeavor, I will do so. Come with me to procure the necessary impedimenta, and I will set out at once."

The older Crowley assimilated this with a pang of joy. In the place of a large bump of trepidation which he had expected to find in his son,

there was apparently a void. He began to ask himself if the "old girl," as he named her lovingly, who had seen him through the hard days, but was taken in the midst of the fruition—if Kennan's mother would commend him for sending her lad out on the far chances.

They went forth to buy an outfit together, father and son, and their jagged edges dovetailed for an hour. The old man renewed his youth, and the other discovered the possibilities of its possession.

Colonel Mat Glawm had gathered together for Philippine service the toughest men and the toughest horses of the Southwest. He was one of Mother Civilization's incorrigibles, and he liked to have hard men about him. Of such were his command—hard, brown, hairy men—packers, mule-skinners, cow-punchers, prospectors, Yarmaks, Attilas, Ghengis Khans, strangers, all, to women and fear. The government gave them bacon, coffee, carbines, horses, and fifteen dollars a month. They intended presently to scourge those far, hot islands, leaving a blood-strewn trail of subjection from Batan to Sarangan. Into this nest of raw powder, boarding transport at Presidio, came the pale, spectacled Kennan Crowley, with a cheerful but puzzled smile, and a book of military regulations half in his brain and the rest in his pocket. Glawm looked him over.

"Hullo, Birdie!" he offered. "And so you're the output of old Blacksnake Crowley?"

"Yes, colonel, and I am honored indeed in meeting such an old and good friend of my father's."

"Birdie, run over to the adjutant," said Glawm, "and have him issue you a Chinese cook and a horse and carriage."

Kennan obeyed, with thanks, and when a roar broke out in the officers' mess, his own laugh was only second to his understanding.

The great Glawm was troubled. Birdie was a grave concession, and the only one. In the name of the old days, Glawm had accepted a Cumberer. His chain of force was only as powerful as the weakest link. Manifestly the weakling must be cast out; but then, again, it was not in the cards for the colonel to play anything but fair with the son of his old side-kicker, now a man of capital and the East.

Six weeks later Glawm's Wild Men took the field. It was just after Zapote Bridge, and the rebel hotbeds of the southern country—Santa Tomas, Silang, Indang, Talisay, Batangas, and the Camarines—had not yet been rifled by American troops. Out for the dirty work, under none but general orders, Glawm and his men left Malate barracks, Manila, when it was still strong with the garlic of the Spanish soldiers. And the Cumberer, having been perverse enough to keep his health, sat in the midst of the staff, sat with the grace of a shoemaker, upon a notoriously rough horse, his smile pleased but pained.

San Pedro Macati was passed. The dead, still Pasig trail stretched ahead. Glawm's trumpeter sounded "Trot." It is reported that in the next hundred yards Birdie banged himself—disdaining the saddle for rods at a time—against every square inch of his mount, from ears to crupper—sharp, staccato blows. Then, with a despairing glance at the brazen sky, he disappeared from the midst of his kind. The adjutant's horse leaped him prettily, and the van of the Wild Men perceived the Cumberer stretched upon the dazzling highway.

"I dare say—bless me!—I dare say I presented a rather undignified appearance," Kennan commented, as he arose to his knees. "I believe I should prefer to walk."

There was an oath from Mat Glawm, which the men declared sizzled the bacon in their saddle-bags. "Get up there, quicker'n hell," he roared. "If you're dumped again, I'll rope you on with a diamond hitch. Grab a root if you see yourself goin'!"

"If by 'root' you refer to the front part of the saddle which curves upward," the son of Blacksnake replied mildly, "I may say that I did think of that, but when I would reach for it, sir—it would n't be there!"

That lives in the memory of scores to-day, where the land is new and there is blood upon the ground—"the front part of the saddle which curves upward."

They drew the first shot riding along the shore of Laguna de Bay in the afternoon, and slept in the foul big town of Silang that night. The natives fled before the Wild Men, leaving the towns deserted, save for the far-diseased and the pariahs, and stripped of food, save for poisoned salads. When the command mounted the next morning, the Cumberer was not in the midst of the staff. The surgeon-major found him studying the rock-formations at the edge of a by-trail.

"This is n't fair, Birdie," he said. "Glawm is n't a patient man. He's piling up an awful licking for you. Get aboard."

"That's just the point, major," the other said sadly. "I could n't double my leg over Thrasher without knotting it in a cramp. I was leading him to these rocks to ascend, when I became interested in the rocks themselves, from a geological standpoint——"

A whimper of pain broke through the grin on the dead-white face of the Cumberer, as the other shoved him into the saddle. The surgeon-major saw that Birdie's trousers were caked with dried blood and glued to his legs. He knew the agony from other services, although he had never been as soft nor as riddled as this.

"I don't know what I should do if Thrasher was n't so considerate," Crowley managed to impart through grinding teeth.

Now, it must be understood that this was only the second day of real service, and that the Cumberer, although unhardened and even undeveloped physically, carried about with him no organic lesion. There-

fore, when he fainted in mid-forenoon, it was from sheer pain, and not a touch of sun as some supposed. Birdie opened his eyes presently, to find that he could not lift his body. His face was chafing against the Thrasher's mane, and the cavalry was winding through one of the dim Silang gorges. The air had been born again with a Nirvanic coolness, and somewhere a river murmured.

Kennan Crowley slowly realized that he was tied to his horse like a bag of grain. It did not occur to him that Glawm carried no hospital corps, that the pack-train was a day behind, that there were no ambulances along, and that eight hundred men cannot lose a day's work for one more fragile. He felt himself bound to a sweating, churning beast, and a poison-sac broke in his brain. He was obsessed by some dark, disordered devil who covered all his thoughts with the red mist which slays the soul. But for the moment he revelled. Strength rippled over him. The hand of man was turned against him, and he would fight his kind—one to eight hundred—with screaming joy. Pain? He had passed through all pain; it had no hold upon him more. Death was the thing—the fighting death.

Glawm started. A grayish-yellow face was twisted up toward his with a curse and a demand. The staff of the Wild Men looked for instant murder to be done. This failing, they waited for Glawm's shining knuckles to blacken the insolent contortion against the Thrasher's mane. One word escaped the surgeon-major, a good man and true:

"Sun-madness!"

"Halt!" Glawm called, and his trumpeter blew it back into the gulch.

From the top of the cliffs towering over the trail there came now a crash of Remingtons, and a voltage of slugs as they cut their way into the staff and the van.

"Hug the cliffs—out of range, you men!" Glawm called; then to his orderly added: "Cut that fellow loose!"

The amazed soldier obeyed. The Cumberer straightened up in the saddle, the devil looking out of his torture-weaved face. The devil's eyes were on Glawm.

"You hear me," he said low and viciously. "I'm going back to Manila. I am going back to Manila now, alone, on foot. You and your unchristly mob have n't got a monopoly on nerve——"

"Sun-madness," urged the surgeon-major at Glawm's ear, as he furiously beckoned the Cumberer to be silent.

Glawm tongued his dry lips. He seemed planning a game to play with the rebels above, as well as listening. "That's all right, Birdie," he said strangely. "We'll see about Manila later! . . . Hug the cliffs, you men! . . . We've got a little fight on our hands just now, Birdie!"

"You've got a fight on your hands with me—the only fight in the Archipelago!" the Cumberer sneered.

The enlisted men could not hear. The staff was a little family that believed in Glawm. The staff knew that Crowley deserved death, even in a volunteer outfit, but they left it to Glawm, who was wise, though just now moving in a most mysterious way.

The colonel spurred ahead a few yards to the point where the trail sagged abruptly into a river-bed. The position of the natives in the rocks above was no accident, but an inspiration, he perceived. They were waiting for the American cavalry to descend into the open gorge below, where they might be slain leisurely from the heights.

The Silang gorges were splendid fighting country—for the defenders. Just now the natives were not the hunted, harried gang of refugees that occasionally fired at American outfits a year later. They were fresh, fed, vaguely organized. They believed in God, their leaders, and their rice-paddies. The yellow Malay blood was hot with hate, had not yet fallen into solution with fear. Glawm's halted column lay in a canyon, the troops stretched for a half-mile behind, and as incapable of self-protection as a snake wedged in a gas-pipe. When the snake's head protruded, it would be smashed. When Glawm's cavalry poured down into the open gorge—any synonym for "smashed" covers the ground.

"If we had their position, we could lick Europe," Glawm said thoughtfully, as he rode back.

Just then a well-aimed Remington slug sung down from the cliffs. The adjutant coughed, shook himself, and dropped from the saddle. His mount had stepped out a foot too far.

"Sun-madness," mumbled the Cumberer.

He was staring fascinated at the fallen officer, now in the arms of the surgeon-major. The verity of things grew upon his mind and banished one by one the figments of disorder. It was true that they had tied him to his mount, a heinous thing, but they could not leave him behind. Here was a man shot in the brain, a man who had laughed at him yesterday. There was some meaning to this march! . . . All these men hated him, believed him unfinished—but war could heal that, clear it all away, even the words he had spoken! . . . "Sun-madness"! He warmed toward the surgeon-major for that word. And there was valor in the profile that bent above the fallen.

No one had given him battle, and now his lust turned to the common enemy. Great new thoughts burned the pale, mild student. He would make good in the eyes of this hating horde. His fighting animal was awake.

"I'll get at you presently, Birdie," Glawm said in an ugly tone. "Is poor Terry goin' out, Doc?"

"Gone," muttered the surgeon-major.

"We'll give the niggers some funeral music for this," the leader replied, calling up his chief of staff. "Bates," he added, "ride back to Major Peters of the rear squadron. Tell him to dismount his men and crawl up into these cliffs from behind—'Pache fashion. Tell him they've killed Terry, and that the closer he can get to the niggers before they know it, the sweeter Terry sleeps! Tell him we'll keep 'em busy in the gorge below while he's getting his flank movement into shape."

Bates turned his horse and rode back along the lines. Glawm, forgetting his own orders, had reigned up in the centre of the trail. The rim of his campaign hat flapped, and his cheek burst into bleeding from a grazing shot.

"It's a fight, by Jawdge!" drawled the Cumberer.

Glawm turned to him savagely now. "No, we're out for wild flowers, you yellow blotch! . . . Birdie, you've got a yellow streak as broad as a beaver's tail down your back, but I'm going to use you! Your father sent you out here for me to kill you off, and I'm going to do the same in—le' me see—about fifteen minutes." Glawm grew hotter because chaos was vanquished from the other's face. He was talking at a deprecating smile.

"Don't, I pray, colonel," Birdie said—"don't use dear Thrasher to kill me off. He's all but scalped me already, and I'm so afraid something might happen to him!"

Glawm's intensity, and the covered body against the rocks, cut the humor from the moment.

"In fifteen minutes," Glawm went on, in a low, quick fashion, "Peters will be up yonder, ready to strike, and you will be down in the open gorge, keeping the niggers busy, heart and hand—you and a dozen men!"

"I s'pose they will really shoot at us," the Cumberer remarked in a resigned tone. He was standing at Thrasher's head now, and polishing the lenses of his spectacles. He did n't notice, apparently that the staff was grinning at him warmly. His lips were quite steady, and his jaw stood out gaunt as a ridge-pole under canvas. Afoot, Birdie lost his hapless look.

A dozen men were called from the first troop. They came forth blithely, as men invited to dine. This is the tragedy of the service. No one had sent them out for Glawm to kill them off. The Remingtons spat down upon the white, beaten sand at the far edge of the trail. The buzz of insects grew loud as the distant murmur of a city. They were tense, sweating moments. Glawm leaned over at last and ripped the shavetail insignia from the shoulder of the Cumberer's blouse. His orderly cut off the broad yellow cavalry stripes from Crowley's trousers. Marks of an officer catch the eye of a rifleman. The

surgeon-major was sad at heart. He wondered what sort of pals Glawm and the father of the misguided one had been. He was sorry for Birdie; sorry for Glawm, whom he saw to be cold with fear.

"Take 'em on now, Birdie!" Glawm ordered hoarsely, looking at his watch. "It's time for Peters to be in shape. Don't let your men bunch up! Cross the river-bed lively and duck into the trail on the other side—out of range!"

"Le' me go along, colonel," gulped the surgeon-major.

"Hang onto your chemisette, you pirate!" Glawm growled.

"Retain at least your self-possession, dear major," Birdie drawled. "I go to prepare a place for you. And take good care of Thrasher! . . . Come on, fellows!"

That "Come on, fellows!" changed the aspect of affairs in the minds of several of the men—a quick and business-like utterance. In it there was neither rank nor nerves, which are not needed in the Silang gorges. It pulled a cheer from the waiting van, leeches against the cliff; an instant later a raw, high-pitched yell and a drumming of guns came from the heights. Down the steep bank scrambled the little party, the Cumberer limping in the lead. Glawm's trick to occupy the attention of the rebels was pure logic. The Thirteen had entered the impregnated zone. One was down.

Birdie turned, unfolded his command, lifted the fallen, and chucked the body easily up the trail out of range, rejoining his men in a twinkling. The staff muttered acclaim. Down, down toward the little ribbon of river that boiled with wasted shots, trotted this plaything of the enemy. Another fell, and Crowley sent him back on a trooper's shoulders. He led the way into the stream, turned, and shouted upward:

"My Gawd, colonel, hold fast to Thrasher—he's so impulsive!"

Only Glawm was silent. The staff and the van were crowded to the edge of the trail above, roaring like mad for the men below to make better time across to cover. The surgeon-major called upon his gods, vague and various, upon friendships of the Younger World, upon the pity of fatherhood—for the troops to be unleashed for the rescue! Glawm's hand tightened like a steel hook upon his arm. He seemed to be fighting seven devils.

"Curse you!—have I not his father to face? I dare not waste more men—until Peters attacks! He brought it on himself—brought it on himself. I would have murdered him with my hands if you had n't whispered, 'Sun-madness—sun-madness—'"

Birdie had slipped to his knees. His hat was gone, his face turned upward in the white sunlight. Blood and a grin were there, and the esoteric wit of Mars on his lips—oaths which men never hear save when the guns play accompaniment. His men sprang upon him like bees to cover a torn queen, then flew apart with a glorious cry, for the Cum-

berer had gained his feet. A sob came from the surgeon-major, and a prayer from the white lips of Glawm—a prayer that Peters, the flanker, might be spurred into the fight, and the son of Blacksnake spared.

Birdie, supporting a wounded trooper, was driving his darlings before him. Only one lay behind on the river-bank, but most had gained the shelter of rocks beyond. There had not been a blemish on the valor of the whole expedition. No wounded had been left behind. The hunched figure on the river-bank was still. Two hundred Filipinos were firing at the last limping form bearing its burden to cover, but their eyes were dazzled by the glamour of pluck. . . . The burden fell from the Cumberer's arms, then both were whipped behind the rocks! . . . The roar of the watchers was changed to a groan.

Kennan Crowley appeared again, alone, bare-headed, wabbly, running in a queer, uncoupled way—back toward the silent figure on the river-bank!

Glawm's heart would have broken had he not yelled the "Charge!" that instant! The cavalry tore its way down into the gorge like an explosive blast. It was not until the Cumberer had been lifted into his arms, and the surgeon-major reported life, that Glawm realized his men were no longer under fire, and that the whipping, cracking racket above came from the Krag carbines of Peters's dismounted squadron, now smearing Western ethics upon the flanked rebels.

Birdie lay in an ambulance in the plaza of Silang that night. The garrisoning column of infantry had come up with pack and wagon-trains of impedimenta. Oh, the mules that sung in that torrid night—mystic, melancholic mules that brayed to the tended moon, imploring her to placate the hard heart of the squealing bell-mare—and the buck-thewed packers of the caressing curse! Coffee and bacon on the bivouac fires; cavalry mounts straining at the pickets or muzzling in the grain-bags; sentries mounted on the ammunition-piles; fire-light on the big covered wagons, and tales of valiant death abroad!

"Ah, this day," murmured the Cumberer—"this day my Soul has been caught in the webs of Delusion!"

"Cobwebs won't hurt you, Birdie," said the surgeon-major softly. "What you say about the Soul may all be, but you've got four fresh punctures in your present incarnation. It's my business to keep the Soul from leaking out. Go to sleep!"

Glawm appeared. For the twentieth time since the cavalry reached Silang he had glanced an anxious question to the surgeon-major. For the twentieth time the surgeon-major nodded cheerily.

"Birdie, my son," said Glawm, "I have cabled your father that he lived again in the open gorge to-day—that old Blacksnake lived again and ran amuck!"

"Sun-madness, colonel," Birdie drawled. "Oh, I say, that will tickle father! . . . You're sure dear old Thrasher is in good hands? I shall need another course of osteopathy presently."

A couple of troopers were dickering for cigarette tobacco with one of the packers in the centre of the plaza.

"All the fun was in the gorge," one of the troopers explained racily. "They were peppering us a whole lot from the rocks, and nine out of thirteen got theirs. That's getting shot up some. But you ought to see that soft-shell *Teniente* under fire! He can't ride no more than a seal, but I'd go to hell for that son of——"

The rest was lost in a wild plaint of the mules.

"Birdie," whispered the surgeon-major, "you may live to bombard Liverpool or lay siege to St. Petersburg or become a Messiah to the Turks—but you'll never get a whiter compliment than that!"



ROMANY

BY CHARLES HAMILTON MUSGROVE

THE city frets in the distance, lass,
 The city so grim and gray;
 A glare in the sky by night, my lass,
 And a blot on the sky by day;
 But we are out on the long white road,
 And under the wide free sky,
 And the song that was born in my heart to-day
 Will sing there till I die.

The long white road and the wide free sky,
 And the city far away;
 A good-night kiss in the twilight, lass,
 And a kiss at the break of day;
 For light are the loads we bear, my lass,
 By highway and hill and grove,
 And the sunlight is all for life, my lass,
 And the starlight all for love.

THE WHITE PASSION OF THE SEA

By Nina Spalding Stevens

SHE had thrilled with the thought of his proximity when she read his name on the passenger list. Nine wonderful days on the same ship, with nothing but the sea and sky about them! They would have long, beautiful talks together, and she would remember every precious word and tell it all to the reading circle to which she belonged in her small Western town. They had studied the works of this minor poet only a few months before, and had unanimously agreed with her enthusiastic statement that he combined the delicacy of Sidney Lanier with the strength of Walt Whitman. What names she had with which to conjure her way into the treasure-house of his mind—Maeterlinck, Ibsen, Omar, and Amiel. He would see that she too belonged to the elect. Her husband was a prosperous young merchant, whose mind balked at anything beyond the newspapers, and she felt that he did not understand her. This was their first trip to Europe.

When their chairs had been placed and the people had arranged about their baths and their seats at table and had settled themselves in their appointed places, she had turned her glowing young face to the gray-haired, perfectly-groomed woman who sat next to her, and said, with enthusiasm, "Isn't it beautiful?"

Her neighbor looked up slowly, swept her with a glance, her eyebrows slightly arched as if in surprise. "Yes?" she said, with a rising inflection which lifted a drawbridge between them as effectually as though the moat in reality yawned at their feet. Evelyn felt herself flush deeply as she realized that simply being on the same steamer did not annul the conventionalities of the land.

As the days passed she felt this more and more. It was not at all like the stories that she had read of life on an ocean liner. She blushed again when she thought of her answer to the chief steward's question as to whether they wished seats at the first or second table. "Why, the first, of course," she had said haughtily—and then heard the Poet arrange for the second. When day after day she and her husband went in to dinner at half after five, with all the children and

most of the old ladies, and afterward looked down upon the gayly dressed later diners, she felt that they had made a serious mistake.

"It is such a bore to dine so early," she said one day, as they passed the Poet's corner on their way to the saloon. She writhed when her husband answered: "Why, it's only half an hour earlier than supper at home." But she forced back the angry tears and followed her unconscious husband.

At last the Poet had noticed her. She had brought a volume of his decadent verse with her and had carried the book about with her for several days—unostentatiously at first, and then boldly flaunting it before him as she walked up and down the deck with dreamy eyes. She caught his glance at the moment of recognition and exulted within her soul.

That night it was late when he came from dinner. When she was sure he had seen her, she climbed the stairs to the windy, slippery upper deck, and, standing beside the railing, she waited. Her eyes looked across the limitless slaty sea, but her thoughts were busy with finite things. His step beside her made her turn her head. Her eyes were startled, but her lips did not falter. "I knew that you would come," she said.

"I tried not to," he admitted, and his voice made the blood rush from her heart in quick waves. She had been so sure that it would have just that deep and tender tone.

"Why?" she asked quickly.

"There were two reasons," he smiled.

"Oh, your wife and my husband!" she scorned. "What have they to do with—this?"

He was silent, watching her with half-closed eyes.

"It is all so great and wonderful, and I wanted you to be here—I willed you to come," she confessed, throwing up her head proudly and facing him. "Back on the decks one feels still on shore. And the people—what do they understand?" she quoted.

"You thought that I would?" he questioned.

"I know that you do," she asserted. "Why, the only book that I have with me is one of yours."

"That is the proof!" he cried. "Allah is in his garden, and his garden is the sea."

She felt that she must prove herself worthy of his notice. He leaned over the railing close to her, and she cried: "Look down at the white passion of the sea. It resents the interference of man."

"The white passion of the sea," he repeated. "A good thought. And yet," he continued, "a ship seems to become the gift of the Infinite when it slips at launching into the water."

She turned and looked deep into his eyes, with an eager, joyous glance, thrilling with the wonder of his understanding. And he, because he was more man than poet, and because her eyes seemed to challenge him and they were beautiful, and also because the upper deck was deserted, crushed her to him and kissed her on her mouth.

"Oh!" she cried shudderingly, when he released her. Then "Oh!" she cried again, with repulsion. "You—brute!"

He looked at her in surprise as real as her own—and turned and left her. She leaned against the railing, sick and faint, her burning face in her hands. He had not understood! Oh, it was too horrible! He had not even respected her mentality.

She did not know how long she had been standing there, but her face and hair were dripping with the spray when she heard her husband's voice.

"Hello, Evelyn!" he cried. "I've been hunting all over the ship for you. What are you looking at?"

In confusion she murmured: "At the white passion of the sea."

He glanced down at the phosphorescent foam falling away from the prow. "Gee!" he said. "It looks more like shaving-soap to me."

"Oh, Jack," she exclaimed, a smile on her lips and tears in her eyes, "you are such a dear! It does look exactly like shaving-soap."



THE LARK

BY FLORENCE EARLE COATES

THERE is a legend somewhere told
Of how the skylark came of old
To the dying Saviour's cross
And, circling round that form of pain,
Poured forth a wild, lamenting strain,
As if for human loss.

Pierced by those accents of despair,
Upon the little mourner there
Turning his fading eyes,
The Saviour said, "Dost thou so mourn,
And is thy fragile breast so torn,
That Man, thy brother, dies?"

"O'er all the world uplifted high,
We are alone here, thou and I;
 And, near to heaven and thee,
I bless thy pity-guided wings!
I bless thy voice—the last that sings
 Love's requiem for me!

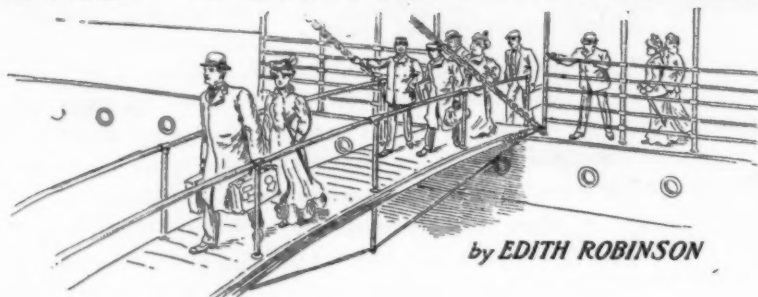
"Sorrow shall cease to fill thy song;
These frail and fluttering wings grown strong,
 Thou shalt no longer fly
Earth's captive—nay, but boldly dare
The azure vault, and upward bear
 Thy raptures to the sky!"

Soon passed the Saviour; but the lark,
Close hovering near him in the dark,
 Could not his grief abate;
And nigh the watchers at the tomb,
Still mourned through days of grief and gloom,
 With note disconsolate.

But when to those sad mourners came,
In rose and amethyst and flame,
 The Dawn Miraculous,
Song in which sorrow had no part
Burst from the lark's triumphant heart—
 Sweet and tumultuous!

An instant, as with rapture blind,
He faltered; then, his Lord to find,
 Straight to the ether flew,—
Rising where falls no human tear,
Singing where still his song we hear
 Piercing the upper blue!

THE CONVICT STRAIN



THE man by my side lifted the Glengarry cap that had partially concealed his features, and offered me the newspaper over which he had been poring ever since I came on deck, some time before.

"I can't say that it's the morning edition, but it's the latest shore news, at all events," he added.

I remembered seeing him reach the gang-plank the previous afternoon, with a newspaper—the apparent cause of his delay—clutched triumphantly in his hand, and had wondered vaguely as to what exciting news had made him nearly lose the boat. I accepted the present proffer with some faint stir of yesterday's curiosity, stimulated to sudden interest by the startling head-lines that met my eye:

HORRIBLE MURDER OF SILAS MERRILL

A WEALTHY MILL OWNER OF BANBURY CENTRE. HIS STEP-DAUGHTER, LOUELLA PRICE, SUSPECTED OF THE CRIME.

Having begun the grewsome tale, I read, perforce, to the end.

Banbury Centre was a manufacturing town in Massachusetts. The murdered man had come home to dinner, as usual, of which he had partaken in company with his step-daughter, the only other member of the household. After the meal, he had lain down for his customary nap on the sitting-room sofa.

He had awakened, apparently, to find the assassin standing over him with an axe, taken from the woodshed. The first blow must have killed him, but, as though fiendish malevolence would wreak

its full fury, there were eight blows altogether upon the body when discovered. The condition of the room was indescribable.

Mr. Merrill was held in much respect by the community, though he was generally considered a hard man in his business dealings. He had large interests in the Banbury mills, and held a good many mortgages on tenement houses among the foreign population. His rigid exaction of dues in this direction suggested that revenge might have been the motive that impelled the deed. Since the defalcations in the Banbury bank, some six months previously, Mr. Merrill had been in the habit of keeping a large sum of money in his own possession; and it was generally known that the quarterly interest on the mortgages had just been paid in. The fact that the person who took this money and a large number of government bonds was evidently acquainted with the combination lock of the safe was an added item in the circumstantial evidence against the step-daughter.

Since the death of her mother, two years previously, Miss Price had done the work of the household. On the unhappy hypothesis of her guilt, search was made for the clothes which she had had on when the crime was committed, and which must inevitably have been blood-stained; but, thus far, without success. There were no stoves or fireplaces in the living rooms, and the furnace was clear of ashes. The cooking had been done, during warm weather, over an oil stove in the shed, where Miss Price had been engaged since an early hour over the week's washing.

The missing girl was last seen at the railroad station, where she took the twelve forty-five train for Boston. She was then dressed in a thin openwork and lace insertion white waist and dark skirt, and carried a small hand-bag. Reckoning upon the unvarying regularity of Mr. Merrill's habits, scarcely three-quarters of an hour could have elapsed between the commission of the crime and Miss Price's appearance at the station. A clew to her possible disappearance might be found in the fact that a week ago she was seen by a fellow townsman on State Street, in the neighborhood of the Custom House, a part of Boston unfrequented by ladies, except in connection with some one of the offices of the numerous transatlantic steamship companies there located.

As I laid the paper down, I caught my neighbor's eyes fastened upon me with so manifest a query that I answered the unspoken words.

"A woman could never have done anything so horrible! Besides, this girl, Louella Price, would have had countless opportunities of removing the old man from her path in a way less likely to excite suspicion."

"It's not so easy to do that nowadays," returned my companion thoughtfully. "Besides, she had to bide her time. To me, the affair has the appearance of long studied deliberation, a cold-blooded attention to detail, that would argue a woman's work."

"If she has run away, I should think she would have taken one of the swift boats," I suggested, reverting to the last paragraph.

"Most of them are rigged with the wireless," dissented my neighbor. "There's more on the inside page, if you care to see."

Later, in my state-room, I read a brief personal sketch of the obscure village girl whose name, overnight, had been spoken by half a continent. Louella Price was described as a person of prepossessing appearance and refined manners. Of retiring and even cold disposition, she had few acquaintances in her native town, and no intimate friends. She took no part in the limited social life about her; nor did she, in local parlance, "keep company" with any one. She was a devoted attendant at the town library, and her reading was said to be of the best description. The possession of some literary talent was evidenced by an occasional story contributed to one of the minor magazines. A blurred newspaper reproduction of a photograph taken ten years before represented rather a pleasing face, but one difficult to associate with any characteristic potent for either good or ill.

"I'm afraid the horrid tale was too much for you," said my neighbor on deck the next morning, when I returned the newspaper with a somewhat feeble smile of thanks. "Or—it was rather rough last night, now we're fairly on the open sea."

"Both affected me, perhaps," I answered reflectively. "Generally I skip all these horrors, but this affair has a certain psychological suggestion that gives it an interest aside from its brutality. It's like the first chapter of one of Gaboriau's novels, that contains the clew to the dénouement, if one is only clever enough to discern it."

"The real significance of most cases lies in a very small compass," he answered thoughtfully. "In this one, it's the girl's clothes. If they are not discovered, I doubt if, under whatever other weight of circumstantial evidence, she could be convicted."

"I hope it won't sound like a very dreadful confession"—I hesitated—"but I cannot refrain from a certain sympathy with criminals of the very worst sort. Think of what they must suffer afterwards!"

"It is not the first time that I have encountered—will you forgive me for saying—this misplaced sympathy?" he answered. "The cell of every condemned man is filled with the choicest flowers sent by these gentle, pitying souls, who never fail to try to defeat the ends of justice by imploring the pardon of each abandoned wretch."

The criminal nature is necessarily something outside all their experience, actual or potential."

"Consciously, at least, my sympathy came from a story I read when I was a very little girl," I said slowly, "too young for the author's name to have meant anything to me, even if I had noticed it. It was called 'The Last Day of a Condemned Man.' You can perhaps dimly imagine the effect of Victor Hugo's masterpiece upon a morbidly sensitive child. I have not slept well lately," I went on, momentarily forgetful of my slight acquaintance with my listener in the intensity of my reawakened feelings, "and last night there seemed to be a fusion between that never to be forgotten story and this last edition of the world's news. With an insistence beyond all my power to suppress, I followed that unhappy girl from the time the crime was committed till the present moment. How, as she left the house, she must have had to restrain her impulse to run; how new and strange the familiar houses by the way, how oddly changed the faces of the village folk. How, as the train crept to the city, at every station she looked to see the crowd that had assembled to witness her arrest. At last in the city, her heart beat at every hurrying step; she saw a menace in every policeman, heard an accuser in each shrill newsboy voice. Think, too, of the awful sense of isolation pressing upon her in the crowded streets—the unutterable loneliness of being the only person in the world who knows a horrible thing—till she would have clung to any human being who knew her crime. Then the momentary respite when she gained the boat; perhaps her giving herself up for lost when, at the last moment, a man jumped the gangplank; the mortal fear that filled the night; the gradual passing of the whole thing, as some hideous nightmare, from her active consciousness, as a strain under which no mind could long endure; the sensation that she had identified herself with a girl named Louella Price by some morbid stress of sympathy; perhaps even the feeling that one has after some tremendous normal experience—the first death in one's home, for instance—that she had somehow become invested with a new—an innocent—personality."

"The girl's guilt fits in with a theory I've always held regarding the horrible crimes that now and again startle some peaceful New England community," said my companion thoughtfully: "that they may be due to that strain of criminal blood in its veins when, in Colonial times, a shipload of convicts—the worst outpourings of London and Bristol—was deported to the New England coast. In time these wretches disappeared as a distinct class, merged into the law-abiding, God-fearing part of the community; but who knows by what secret spring that evil strain may be suddenly stimu-

lated to life, perhaps to expend itself in one horrible spasm! I didn't like the girl's face—though it might be pleasing to sight. The camera sometimes brings out the indication of unsuspected traits." He unfolded the paper as he spoke, and uttered an exclamation of surprise. The entire inside page was gone!

"I can't think how it happened," I faltered; "I'm sure no one has been in the room but the stewardess; and my companion was too sick to raise her head from the pillow." Later, upon questioning the stewardess, she asserted that she had removed nothing from the room; and, after some further fruitless search, the matter was dropped.

Every morning, when I made a somewhat belated appearance on deck, I found my neighbor ensconced in his chair, his cap over his eyes, and the "last edition," well worn at the creases, open on his knees. But however blinded he might appear to be to anything that was going on about him, he was always instantly aware of my approach, always unobtrusively ready with any service that might tend to my comfort. He took no part in the ship life that was now in full swing; nor did he mingle with the other men in the smoking-room, or over the billiard table. Sometimes we talked for hours, in the desultory fashion to which conversation on shipboard tends; sometimes we sat in silence, but with a growing sense of the companionship that needs no words for interpretation. He was a lawyer, I learned, whose practise had consisted largely of criminal cases. He had been rather overdoing it lately, and the deck of an ocean steamer—some slow-going old tub—had been recommended as insuring absolute freedom from professional cares.

However remote or commonplace the subject that opened our conversation, it was sure to lead to the Banbury murder. And this choice of subject prevailed despite our strenuous efforts to get away from it; impelled not only by a guilty sense that we were defying our respective medical commandments, but with an acute consciousness that the topic was signally out of keeping with our surroundings—the brilliant sunshine, the pure air, the prevailing atmosphere of pleasurable anticipation.

"She did the best possible thing in getting out of the way," he once said, with conviction. "If she succeeded in getting to London, for instance, she could be lost as completely as a needle in a hay-mow."

"At this rate, you will have that poor girl tried, condemned, and executed before we reach the other side," I told him reproachfully. "It is far more likely that we shall find she merely went to town for the 'bargain day' dear to suburban shoppers, or a matinée at the Castle Square."

"One doesn't always judge so much by the direct evidence as by the *feel* that comes to any man in his special line, be he diamond expert, china authority, or manuscript reader," returned my companion. "There may be certain signs, invisible to the layman; in this instance, the girl's literary ability."

"But you don't think literary talent argues a murderous disposition?" I queried, in amazement. "Except, perhaps, toward editors."

"I jumped somewhat hastily from premise to conclusion," he smiled. "Such a person could have thought out the whole affair beforehand, like the plot of a story; seeing its weak points, anticipating what this or the other character would do under presumable circumstances. The cleverest schemes for robbery on a gigantic scale I ever heard were devised by a certain author over his pipe. He had a plot for robbing the Green Vault at Dresden that made me feel I should warn the King of Saxony of the peril that threatened the royal treasure house."

"Could it be that——" I sat suddenly upright, with wide open eyes.

My companion interpreted my thoughts and finished the sentence with easy assurance.

"That any one on board might be Louella Price? Not to my knowledge. The description—gray-blue eyes, brown hair, slightly gray; pale complexion—fits a score of indubitably respectable ladies on board."

Then, by one of our mutual efforts to get away from the topic, he glanced at the book in my hand; and for a time we talked of the innocent subjects thereby suggested.

"Your friend is not a good sailor?" he queried presently. "We are having a wonderfully smooth passage—and fresh air is generally considered the best help for seasickness."

"If you mean the lady who shares my state-room with me, she has not left her berth," I answered. "She says she is sensitive to the light, and, although we have an inside room, keeps the curtains of her berth constantly drawn."

"I beg your pardon," said my neighbor, trying to smoothe out the folds of his much read paper. "I supposed you were accompanied by a friend."

"No," I replied. "You see, about six months ago, after my great loss—I felt that my effort to steady my voice was not marked with success—"my physician urged me to go to England for change and a possible relief from insomnia. A friend told me of an English-woman who was going home to be married, and I was glad to make arrangements to have the girl with me. But her lover died a little

while before the date of sailing, and she decided to remain in America. Fortunately, I found no difficulty in disposing of the extra berth. And, really, I have been congratulating myself ever since on my unobtrusive roommate. All the intervening week, I was conjuring up all sorts of images of my prospective *compagnon de voyage*, from a black lady, to somebody who weighed a ton and would come down on me the first night."

"Or Mr. Crawford's bogie of the upper berth?"

I was conscious that I had turned white, and that my hand, resting near my companion's, under the cover of our respective rugs, had grasped his with convulsive energy.

"I beg your pardon—I'm very sorry," he said—evidently without the least idea for what he sought exculpation.

"I'm not afraid of anything real," I explained faintly. "It's the unreal things, the horrors of the imagination, that unnerve me. I can talk quite unconcernedly about the Banbury murder. Besides, here at sea, there is a curious sense of detachment from the world, when all that is seems one with all that was. Cæsar in the senate, Marat in his bath, Silas Merrill in the meagre little New England sitting-room—all are alike so far as any personal signification goes."

"I want to ask you," he said presently, with a suggestion of boyish shyness in his manner, "if I can be of any service to you on landing? The formalities, though really very slight, might seem formidable to any one unused to travelling."

Frankly and gratefully I accepted the offer. And for the ensuing day the subject of Louella Price was not mentioned between us.

"I can't think why your chance remark about Marat and his bath should have been dinging in my brain ever since," he said, the day after, as though the utterance was in pursuance of a conversation momentarily broken off. "It is as though one section of my brain was trying, with maddening insistence, to telephone another part, and 'Central' 'couldn't get it.' To-morrow we shall have the next instalment—perhaps the conclusion—of the story."

"I heard you called 'judge,'" I said, with interest. "Should you, by any means, try this case?"

"Some one gave me a purely honorary title," he smiled; then explained: "The attorney general would preside. The district attorney prosecutes—that is, collects and presents the evidence. There are three assistant district attorneys, of whom I am one; but, except for some very remote contingency, I should not be called in—thank Heaven," he added solemnly; "for the thought that I had sent a woman to the chair would haunt me through eternity." His sudden startled look told me I had turned white. "There seems

to be a string on my mind that jerks it back to that confounded topic! Won't you let me fetch you a glass of water?"

"Thank you, no," I said, trying to smile reassuringly. "I have such a dread of letting 'nerves' get the better of me," I went on. "So many women call nervous prostration what is merely selfishness and ill temper. But now and then some chance word will set an unsuspected nerve quivering. I could hear of the block, the gallows, or the guillotine without a tremor; but the mention of the 'chair'—that once familiar, homely word—is infested with all the horrors of this world and the next. It is a new death, as though death had not been a familiar presence in the world these many years."

After dinner that night, I stepped on deck, to find my neighbor leaning against the rail opposite the saloon door. Immediately he threw away his cigar and came toward me.

"It is fine on the upper deck," he said. "Won't you come up? Please do. It's our last night on board."

A few of the other passengers were above, but after a space we had the deck to ourselves. By and by we paused by the rail, far forward.

"These last ten days have been such a breathing spell," I said. "And to-morrow is almost here, when one must take up the burden of life again."

"You are too young and—and all that goes with it—to find life a burden," answered my companion earnestly. "I have been wishing," he went on, "that we need not hasten our good-bys. Couldn't you stop off a day at Chester, and take the afternoon train to London, instead of the boat express?"

"I know you're too kind to snub me," he resumed, in a crest-fallen tone, as I made a swift, involuntary gesture of dissent. "I suppose I ought to have remembered our brief acquaintance, that we have never even been introduced—although I've known your name for some time. I saw it in your book of Dean Stanley's sermons," he interpolated, with a touch of complacency at his own astuteness. "Eleanora—Rivers," he repeated; and, by some subtle suggestion, I knew it was not the first time by many that he had spoken the name under his breath. "Even if I had not seen it, I should have guessed it to be Eleanora—something soft and graceful and very feminine; full of dignity and reserved strength, too. Mine, if you care to know it, is Richard Jeffries—of Boston."

I had known it since the first day on board, but thought it unnecessary to tell him when or how I had acquired the information.

"I suppose there are other conventions, too, that a nice woman would bear in mind," he resumed; "but somehow—perhaps I'm

only a conceited fool—but I thought that a day's ramble on shore would be—well, of course not as pleasant to you as to me; but still, not so very unpleasant, either."

By what word or gesture I had yielded, I knew not; but the next moment he was looking down upon me, smiling triumphantly.

The following morning I was awake long before the heavy tramping of many feet and the confusion of voices overhead gave notice that preparations for going on shore were under way. As I was about to step on deck, I saw that Mr. Jeffries was before me, talking earnestly with some one I did not recognize. He broke off his conversation and came toward me.

"Who was that man?" I queried, as we went forward. "I haven't seen him before."

"An old acquaintance, from Boston," answered Mr. Jeffries carelessly. "How is the seasick lady?"

"She wasn't in the state-room this morning," I answered, in a puzzled tone. "And that isn't all," I resumed. "She was not in the room when I went down last night. I did not notice her absence at the time—I was thinking of something else—but this morning I saw that her things were lying about, as usual, and offered to help her pack, without receiving any answer. Then I looked into the upper berth, and it was empty. I am sure she was there last night at dinner time, because I took the dinner tray from the stewardess at the door. And she—the lady in the upper berth—talked for almost the first time, and asked me where I was to be in London."

"She may have gone on deck yesterday evening for a little air, after her long confinement, and, as the night was so lovely, decided not go below again."

But the answer, reasonable though it was, failed to satisfy me.

"I was afraid," I whispered, with the involuntary backward glance one gives when sudden inexplicable fear clutches at the heart-strings.

"Afraid of what?" queried my companion quickly.

"I—don't—know," I answered haltingly. "Please don't think me giving way to nerves again; but there has seemed to me something so queer about it all. There was nothing strange, of course, about a seasick person keeping to her berth; but I have had some inexplicable feeling all along about her personality. I have been on the point of speaking of it to you more than once these last few days, but it was too intangible to give intelligible utterance. Does seasickness ever affect the brain? Do you think—that—she could—have jumped overboard?"

"I do not," he answered, with reassuring promptness. "I think," he added, with a smile, "that a certain little lady has a very

lively imagination, which is not surprising, after a sleepless night. There are two other liners in—yonder,” he went on, with evident intent of diverting my thoughts. “I hope they are not going to delay our landing.”

By what process of threats, cajolery, or tips he accomplished his purpose was not apparent; but, despite the augmented crowd, we speedily left our late fellow passengers on the pier and in the custom house, and were in a railway carriage speeding toward Chester.

“I have the pleasurable sensation of running away from the world and the troubles thereof! I fear I missed a great deal in never having played ‘hooky’ in my youth,” said my companion jubilantly. “There is nothing like the deck of an ocean steamer and cutting loose from one’s particular lot in life, for setting a man up. If you were only going back to-morrow, too!” he added.

“To-morrow!” I echoed. “I thought you were to have a little holiday on shore.”

“The pilot boat brought me a cable, recalling me,” he answered, with sudden gravity.

“I hope—no ill news?”

“Important, at all events,” he replied. “Since I sailed, a series of mishaps has occurred in the district attorney’s office. The day of my departure, one assistant died playing handball; soon after, the second fell ill with typhoid, and yesterday came the news that the district attorney himself had been knocked down by an automobile, and that it was doubtful if he recovered from concussion of the brain.”

“Then you may be the prosecuting attorney in the Louella Price case?” I queried.

He bowed gravely.

“Have you heard anything more about it?” I asked

“The English papers give little space to American news, and there were no Boston or New York papers at Liverpool,” he answered.

“Who was that man with you this morning?” I asked suddenly.

“A Boston detective,” he answered reluctantly.

“He thought—that woman—was on board—our boat?” I whispered, with wide open eyes; and went on, as my companion looked at me in manifest embarrassment: “We—some of us—may have sat beside her on deck—talked with her at the table—perhaps even—oh, the thought is too horrible!—slept——”

“Nonsense!” he broke in, almost harshly. “You give your imagination too loose rein. ‘Nerves’ should not be trifled with.”

“The—the—lady in the upper berth! I said there was something queer about her——” I panted.

"What did she look like? You were the only one who saw her," he said, with an effort to speak lightly.

"She had red hair—and was pea-green——" I gasped, brought to a realizing sense of my hysteric folly by my companion's laugh, in which, however, I detected a note that was not all amusement.

"I wish you would tell me anything that is known," I pleaded.

"Nothing of importance has turned up," he answered. "It is only in stories that detectives show astonishing acumen. In this case, they've blundered worse than usual. It is extremely doubtful if the girl made for an outward bound liner, after all. No trace of the clothes has been discovered."

I looked at him with new eyes—the man who, it might be, would hold in the balance the life of this girl, Louella Price; and the sympathy that welled up in my heart, ill placed though it might be, would not be restrained.

"Think of what her life had been in all the dreary years before—the end!" I said. "Can't you see her toiling day after day for that thankless old man, grudging even her poor food and lodging; with her finer tastes, her delicate susceptibilities, constantly jarred against by all the petty vulgarities, the wretched, nagging meannesses, of her daily life; denied every pleasure that youth and natural longing craved; with none but yokels upon whom to expend the pent up passion of an intense nature; perhaps, in the unsuspected background of her being, that convict strain ever suggesting the way out of all her misery—till by and by opportunity and revolt struck hands, and she became a fiend in human shape? Oh, you who may some day stand her accuser, if you hold the fatal clew, you will refrain—deny?"

"Don't," he answered solemnly. "I have taken oath of office, and what I have sworn, I keep."

Frightened by his tone, I shrank back into my seat. He looked from the window, though evidently with unseeing eyes. Presently, forgetting—as he had once and again before—that he had tabooed the subject, he turned to me with the words:

"That eternal ringing up! What can Marat and his bath have to do with it! The question is, the clothes—what did she do with the clothes? If there were no clothes in the case——" He started up, repeating his own just uttered words with new emphasis: "There were no clothes—and there was a bath—the washtub—in the shed!"

I was glad that the train had slipped into a tunnel, so that he could not see the horror on my face as I realized the significance of his words—that he had found a clew.

"There's the cathedral," he said presently.

Do as we would, the freedom of our intercourse on board ship

had vanished; it may be that our coming parting lay heavily upon our spirits. Our returning steps had brought us within sight of the station when my companion suddenly stopped.

"Need it be good-by for always?" he asked impetuously. "You will come home some time? Or, in a few months—a year, at most—I may get a vacation—will you let me come to you then—to ask you something I may not speak of now?"

"Oh, no, no!" I exclaimed; adding, as I saw the pain upon his face: "It has been such a short time——"

"That we have known each other? Ah, but life isn't to be measured by hours and minutes! I know that to a tender-hearted woman, merely to listen to such words may seem a disloyalty to some loved image of the past. But I cannot let you go without telling you. If a man sees happiness almost within his grasp, he will snatch at it, regardless of the proprieties. You are the first woman I ever met who made me feel that I couldn't bear to have her go out of my sight!"

I put out my hand in blind protest, not daring to face the honest, masterful eyes. He took it, held it fast in his own strong, magnetic clasp.

"I can't help feeling that I am something to you," he said vehemently, "and that this is not to be our final parting. I won't weary you by insistence. I won't even ask your address. But you'll let me give you mine? A single word will bring me to you, though it be at the end of the world."

In the near distance sounded the train; and our hurried steps gave no chance for further speech. When we reached the station the train was already in, on the farther platform, to reach which it was necessary to cross the bridge overhead. We were almost at the steps when a man rushed down, bringing up directly before us. He was the officer who had been on the boat that morning.

"I want to speak to this lady," he panted.

There was a warning puff from the engine. Mr. Jeffries laid a detaining hand on my arm as I would have jumped upon the track.

"I'm sorry, sir, but it's important," said the man earnestly. "There was a red wig——"

He broke off at Mr. Jeffries's warning glance. The conductor was running along by the side of the train, calling, "All aboard!"

"I'm afraid we're too late," said my companion, turning to me. "It's most annoying, but there's a later train. Perhaps I'd better see what the man wants." He glanced in at the passenger room, near which we were standing. It was unoccupied. "It's a horrid hole to ask you to wait in, but I won't be a minute."

I waited a minute—many minutes. The air was stifling. The window, high up the wall, was shut and barred. The sunlight

flickered through a large tree, overhead, in sharply defined points of light upon a large chair that stood in the middle of the room. It was some clumsy mechanical rocking chair, perhaps placed there for the supposed predilections of travelling Americans.

I walked up and down the room at ever increasing pace, now gazing with wide open eyes, now peeping furtively over my shoulder at the chair. I stopped at the farthest corner, held by a sudden paralyzing fear. Then an awful fascination assailed—overcame me. I crept toward the middle of the room.

The chair was of massive oak, light colored. Behind were two ordinary legs; those in front had been replaced by a board about a foot in width, reinforced, midway, by another board, fastened on crosswise. The entire chair seemed studded with small electric lights, dazzling, white hot.

The perspiration stood out upon my forehead. I groped for my handkerchief. It was in my hand-bag, that Mr. Jeffries was carrying. With a shriek, I flung myself against the door, beating wildly with my fists. It was opened from without. The two men stood, dumfounded, on the threshold.

"I'm not a condemned woman!" I cried. "I won't sit in the chair!" Sinking to the floor, I crouched against the wall, sobbing. "You knew—about the warm bath——"

"The—warm—bath!" repeated the officer, in a dazed tone. "Oh, Lord! Oh, Lord! Oh——"

Mr. Jeffries turned fiercely upon him.

"I told you the least hint of that horrible woman would drive her mad! Get out, or I'll kill you!"

The officer stepped out of the way of the other's threatening arm. Mr. Jeffries turned to me, trying, with reassuring words, to raise me from the floor.

"She doesn't hear me. She doesn't even know my voice," he whispered. "Oh, my God!"

The officer had approached and laid his hand gently upon the other man's shoulder.

"Go, go!" said Mr. Jeffries impatiently, but without violence. "She can't tell you anything now about the lady in the upper berth——"

"There wasn't any lady in the upper berth," said the officer distinctly.

"Mrs. Rivers——"

"There isn't any Mrs. Rivers, either."

A faint perception may have come to the other man of some meaning to the words—something too monstrous to give harborage.

"Are we all mad together?" he groaned. Then, kneeling by my

side, he called again and once again in a voice that would have brought back the dead: "Eleanora!"

"It's clear as daylight," said the officer. "The double passage engaged six months ago; the English-companion dummy, replaced by the lady in the upper berth, whose cunningly contrived trail would surely have ended in air."

He took the hand-bag from the other man's passive hold and tumbled its contents on the floor. Bonds and bonds and more bonds!

"Old Merrill's safe," he said quietly. "It's the woman herself. It's Louella Price. The game's up, my lady."

And I knew that it was.



THE GUERDON

BY GRACE MACGOWAN COOKE

FORTUNE found me in the street
Yesterday.
Fortune's smile was flattering, sweet,
Yesterday.

But I said her yea nor nay;
Love had met me in the way,
Laughed, and fled with flying feet.

On past Fortune's gifts I sped
Yesterday.
Followed where my wild heart led
Yesterday.
Little, rosy, winged feet
Mocked my speed with speed more fleet,
Till that wild heart ached and bled.

Home when twilight fell I crept
Yesterday.
Hanging head and eyes that wept
Yesterday.
Fortune's hand flung wide my door,
And, my glowing hearth before,
Tired Love lay still and slept.

THE ACCOMPLISHED MRS. THOMPSON

By Norval Richardson

I.

"DICK, it's wonderful! I've found the very woman."

This was Aunt Sarah's greeting to me after my absence of three months, but it was so characteristic of her—this plunging into the middle of a subject without any preliminaries—that I dispensed with the customary questions about health and other minor details and followed her to a quiet corner of the café, where she had already procured a table.

"Yes, it's marvellous," she continued, drawing off her gloves and scanning the menu.

"I'm afraid you are easy to please, Aunt Sarah," I answered dubiously.

"Not at all, my boy; you should see her"—not a bit dampened by my lack of enthusiasm. "She is most agreeable, very trim, evidently scrupulously neat and methodical—I could see that by the way her boots were laced. She says she is quite experienced, and has a whole stack of references, which of course we haven't the time to look up. Besides, I always judge a woman by her face, and this one's is honesty itself."

"What is her name?" I asked, feeling that I ought to ask some kind of a question.

"Mrs. Thompson."

"A married woman! Any children?"

"No children, and I don't think a husband. Of course I didn't like to inquire too particularly. That always did embarrass me."

"Did you engage her?"

"Yes, and she is waiting now for you to appoint the day for her to come."

"You are sure you have not decided too hastily, Aunt Sarah?"

"My dear boy, wait till you see her, and you will congratulate yourself upon your luck in getting such a capable woman, with so little trouble."

I had never seen Aunt Sarah so enthusiastic, yet I could not feel altogether satisfied. There were a few more questions that I felt it my duty to ask her.

"Did you tell her everything Bettie said she wanted her to do? It might have been a fine idea for you to have read Bettie's letter to her, for Bettie is quite up on the subject of housekeeping. She has been reading up on it during the past year. Her theories are splendid."

"Yes; I was minute in my statement of all that was required of her. I told her that the house was not large; that there were only a hall, a living-room, a dining-room, and a den, and—I was not *sure*, but I told her I thought there were three bedrooms upstairs."

"Also a kitchen and butler's pantry," I added reflectively.

"Yes, I told her all that, and that she would be expected to take charge of everything. Of course I told her Bettie would help her a little, such as arranging the flowers and counting the laundry. Indeed, Dick, I don't want you to consider the matter a moment longer. I have engaged her, and it is a miracle that I found her so quickly. By the way, did I tell you that she was extremely good-looking? But do tell me about Bettie and yourself and your honeymoon." She ended with a complacent little gesture which meant that she had relieved her mind of the most important subject, and was willing to consider trifles for a while.

I told her of our little journey in England, and how Bettie had decided to remain with some relatives when I was called back to New York on business. She was to join me, however, in a week now, and had written to me to be sure and procure a maid-of-all-work and begin housekeeping in the little suburban cottage which we had bought and furnished before leaving on our summer trip. Of course I had done nothing of the sort, and had gone to a hotel until she came.

But as the time approached I felt conscience-stricken in not having the house open for her arrival. In my predicament, I had telephoned Aunt Sarah, who was spending the summer at a nearby seashore resort, asking her to come in town for a day and select the maid and anything else that was necessary.

"There is just one thing more that I want you to do for me, Aunt Sarah," I said, when we could keep away from the all-important subject no longer. "I have to leave town in the morning for several days. Will you go out to the cottage with Mrs. Thompson tomorrow, and show her around? You know I expect Bettie to arrive next Thursday, so that will only give her a few days to get the house in running order. I thought I should not move out until Bettie comes, but that will not keep the maid from getting her things out

there, and, for that matter, she can remain after to-morrow, if she wishes to."

Aunt Sarah agreed with me about this, so I left town the next morning, feeling that I was a particularly lucky man.

When I returned the next Thursday I found a Marconi message awaiting me at the hotel, saying the steamer was due to arrive at noon that day. This gave me just two hours in which to get down to the dock. There was also a note from Aunt Sarah, saying that she had left everything in beautiful order at the cottage, and had returned to the seashore, adding that she felt sure that we would find Mrs. Thompson a treasure.

My first thought was to telephone Mrs. Thompson that my wife and I should be out in time for dinner, and to have everything in readiness. It was only a few minutes before I received an answer to my call. A low, distinct voice at the other end asked who I was and what I wanted. I asked if it were Mrs. Thompson, and then stated that we should be out that evening.

"I'm delighted! Everything is in readiness," came the low, modulated voice, "and if you do not object to my offering a suggestion, don't you think it would be a splendid idea to send out some orchids for the table? You know you don't see them much in England, and I'm sure your wife would enjoy them."

"Why, certainly," I stammered in reply. "Thank you for the suggestion;" and I let the receiver drop with a thud.

"Orchids!" I exclaimed, walking away without paying the telephone operator. "Now, what does a maid-of-all-work know about orchids being in England or not?"

I was nonplussed; I did not know what to think. It could not be a joke of Aunt Sarah's. No, she was not clever enough to conceive a joke. Then I blamed myself for not seeing this woman before I engaged her. What kind of creature was she, anyhow? I kept repeating to myself. Her voice was certainly very sweet and soft. Then I began to wonder if she were good-looking—for Aunt Sarah and I did not always have the same taste.

By this time I had reached the dock, and soon forgot all about housekeeping troubles in intently watching a waving handkerchief and a bright red hat that looked delightfully familiar to me.

II.

WE had so much to say—Bettie and I—that housekeeping and the cottage did not enter once into our conversation until we had reached our suburb and were on the trolley car nearing our home.

"Oh, Dick, tell me about the cottage and the maid! You didn't disappoint me and not get one?"

"Oh, no," I answered complacently; "I have one."

"Tell me all about her. Is she satisfactory? I hope that she is fairly decent looking."

"I don't know about her appearance, but she has a charming voice."

"But why don't you know about her appearance?"

"Well, you know, I've never seen her."

"I can't understand, Dick. What do you mean?"

Then I gave her a full account of the whole affair, leaving out only the incident of the orchids.

When we reached our street I gathered up the grips, and we both walked a little excitedly towards the cottage. Bettie was frankly impatient to see the maid, and I must confess that I was somewhat interested myself; for a woman with such a voice could not possibly fail to be interesting, I felt sure.

The hall door was open and the cottage lighted brilliantly—it was half after six in the evening—so that our home-coming was hospitable, to say the least.

When we were on the steps she came out to greet us—a charming apparition in a spotless white gown, elbow sleeves, and white shoes. A jaunty black bow was thrust in her hair, which was quite golden—a shade beyond criticism—and with dark blue eyes, a perfect complexion, and a most fetching smile upon her charming countenance—in fact, to be quite frank, she was stunning.

"Do come in, Mrs. Osborne. I know you must be fearfully fagged. And this is Mr. Osborne! I am delighted to see you both."

After this, Bettie and I followed her meekly into the hall. I dared not look at Bettie, and, whether purposely or not, she would not meet my eyes either.

"Of course you want to go right up to your room," she continued, closing the front door. "Dinner is all ready when you wish it. I've prepared a corking repast in honor of your return."

At this I took the grips and ran up the stairs, for I knew there was no telling what Bettie might say to this last outburst.

In our bedroom, I fell into a chair, breathless, and waited anxiously for Bettie's appearance. She followed in a few moments, entering the room in a most stately manner, a dark flush on her face.

"Well, what do you think of her?" I hazarded.

To this Bettie deigned no reply, turning upon me with a withering glance.

"Don't you think you had better hurry into your evening clothes for the corking—good—dinner?"—this still with the cold dignity.

"Of course I'm not going to dress for dinner to-night, Bettie. Let's go down just as we are."

She agreed coldly to my suggestion, and in a few minutes we were seated at the table, as stiff a couple as I ever hope to see. Oh, that dinner! I hope the man who said we never forget anything was a liar, for if I must go through life with the memory of that dinner with me always, I shall end in an asylum.

The table was beautiful. A large crystal bowl—one of our wedding presents—held the orchids, mauve shades softened the candle light, and grape fruit, delightfully flavored, was placed before us for the first course.

"You know, Aunt Sarah spent Sunday out here, arranging things," I remarked, by way of breaking the embarrassing silence.

"So you told me, coming out on the car," Bettie replied unresponsively.

"Most charming old lady," Mrs. Thompson put in sympathetically as she removed the grape fruit.

The thermometer fell below zero. I half feared Bettie was going to leave the table. With the whitebait I hazarded another question:

"Do tell me about Nice. Was it very hot there in September?"

"We found it quite comfortable," was Bettie's second frigid reply.

"Think of being in Nice at any time but spring! It must have been very disappointing," came Mrs. Thompson's second comment.

After this a dead silence ensued all the way down to the *pêche à la Melba*.

"Will you have your cigar on the porch, Mr. Osborne? It's quite warm enough to sit out. I'm so sorry there are no cigarettes in the house, Mrs. Osborne—or perhaps you have your own." This Mrs. Thompson accompanied with a dazzling smile at Bettie.

I fairly held my breath, awaiting results. Bettie rose stiffly from her chair.

"I never smoke. Mr. Osborne will take his cigar on the porch—alone;" and with this she rustled out of the room and up the stairs.

III.

I DID smoke my cigar alone, and also smoked easily half a dozen. Why Bettie had concentrated all her disapproval of the maid upon me, I was at a loss to understand, yet her manner had been so painfully frigid that it took me two hours in which to decide to go to her room and talk it over.

When I entered the room I found her lying across the bed and sobbing as if her heart were broken.

"Why, Bettie!" I cried, putting my arms about her. "What in the world is the trouble?"

"Get away from me, you brute!" she cried. "To think that I came all the way back from Europe to a man like you!"

"Bettie, what do you mean?"

"You know what I mean. It's that horrid woman! And you told me you had not even seen her before!"

And then came another outburst of weeping.

"But, Bettie," I said, completely puzzled, "I never saw her before to-night. I don't understand."

"Of course you don't understand. You don't want to understand. Didn't I see her smile at you during dinner in that horrid, confidential way of hers? Besides, she had on a finer dress than I ever hope to have. It was all hand-embroidered linen. You can't fool me, Dick Osborne."

At this I felt it was my time to become angry.

"I explained to you thoroughly that Aunt Sarah engaged her and made all the arrangements. No matter what you mean by your insinuations, I never saw her until this evening. Of course I see that she is too familiar, and that we do not want her, but why you should act so silly is beyond me. It would be very much more sensible for you to stop crying like a baby, and help me to decide what is best to be done."

"There is nothing to do but to tell her to leave here at once. If she does not go to-morrow, I will."

"That is easily enough arranged. I shall tell her in the morning that we shall not need her after she has served breakfast."

"After breakfast! Do you think I would let her serve me another meal? Never! Tell her to leave the house early in the morning."

"Very well," I said, with attempted composure, turning into my own room. "But you must admit that it was—a 'corking'—good—dinner?"

I could not resist this last thrust, for I was more annoyed with Bettie than I had ever been before, although we had had several little difficulties during our honeymoon.

Early the next morning I knocked on Bettie's door.

"Come in," was the faint reply.

"I think you had better go down with me when I tell her that we do not need her any longer. It's a woman's duty, anyhow."

Bettie was standing at the window with her back to me, and vouchsafed no reply. I had repeated my request before she answered:

"If you will come here and look out of the window, you will see that it is unnecessary for either of us to tell her anything."

I went to the window and looked out.

A large red motor-car was at the curb in front of our house, and Mrs. Thompson was just climbing in and taking a seat beside the chauffeur as I looked out. In a second the car was gone up the street and had disappeared from our view.

"Well!" I gasped. "What does it mean?"

"I don't know, I'm sure," Bettie said, turning away from the window, and not failing, I thought, to see the astonishment on my face.

"Jove! but I'm glad," I said, with a mighty relief. "I didn't know how to tell her to go."

Downstairs I found this note on the table:

DEAR MR. OSBORNE:

I find myself in a most embarrassing situation, and it is best to be perfectly frank with you, so that you will not think hard of me. I left my husband two weeks ago, and applied for a position as housekeeper and maid combined. I had no means of support, and knew I was best fitted for this work. Your house was the first position I have held. My husband found where I was, and has just come for me this morning. We have agreed to overlook our little differences of temperament, and so I am going back with him at once. Tell Mrs. Osborne she will find the coffee made and on the gas stove. Believe me,

Always sincerely,

MRS. THOMPSON.

"Does that restore your confidence in your husband, or do you need still stronger proof?" I said haughtily to Bettie.

But I never showed her a telegram that awaited me at my office. It was this:

You have my deepest sympathy in your conjugal alliance. You are what I should call, literally, up against it.

VIOLETTE SHERWOOD THOMPSON.

THE MUSICIAN

BY FULLERTON L. WALDO

YOUR soul was for a moment raised to bliss
 Along an upward-climbing heavenly stair?
 Not to the player be all praise for this:
 That music, moving, beautiful, was made
 Not merely by his instrument who played,
 But by your hungry heart that listened there.

MISS MERRIAM'S GROOM

By Harold R. Durant

I.

THE house was ponderously great, almost appalling in its massive grandeur; with luxury glaring in every inch of its symmetrical architecture. It faced the sea, with a rich emerald carpet spreading between. In the rear were the low-lying, spacious barns, and then northward stretched undulating meadows of nodding timothy and fragrant clover. To the west the spotless green-houses glitteringly reflected the morning sun, and beyond, in the lush grass, the twisted, knotted apple trees extended in orderly, military rows, like aged soldiers. Offshore, shrill crying mackerel gulls circled rapidly, keenly peering for food in the still water which glimmered below in silent, peaceful placidity. The June air was of a faint, yet penetrating, sweetness, carrying with it the subtle, suggestive odor of new flowers and an awakened earth, together with the tang of the brine and the spices of the south.

Miss Merriam walked slowly along the grating gravel path toward the stables, her eyes lost in a preoccupied contemplation of the fresh, promising beauty around her. There was a pliant grace in her slim, youthful figure, and from the mass of auburn hair, which the sun had transformed to a glistening bronze diadem, to the narrow, high-arched feet, there were the preëminent marks of unmistakable, uncompromising quality. There was class in every clear-cut feature, gentility in each poise, and in her could be defined the impenetrable mental reserve of one endowed with higher things.

She suddenly halted as ominous noises floated through the wide barn door and rudely shattered her delicious reverie. High words, punctuated by picturesque profanity, shocked her beyond measure, and then, following close upon a sound like the crack of a whip, a man appeared in the doorway, staggering back on his heels, with one hand clapped to his eye. It was Dobbins, the coachman. Dobbins, the paragon of obsequious, servile virtue—Dobbins, the painfully correct person whose heretofore unhampered, Czar-like reign throughout the broad realm of stables had been one signally unmarred or unbroken by reason of personal clashes with his underlings—was now evidently upset by a seething, raging revolution within. It was

loomingly plain that somebody had handed the immaculate and superb Dobbins a swift punch on his imperious eyeball. Wherefore his mistress marvelled much, and immediately concluded that such unprecedented conduct merited punishment swift and exemplary. Her voice pierced the still air with frigid acidity.

"Dobbins!"

Dobbins wheeled in unfeigned surprise and respectfully stood rigid, meanwhile blinking hard as the red eyelid gradually puffed outward.

"Dobbins, I think you have received a severe blow on your eye."

"Yes, miss."

"I am waiting to hear what could cause such an unseemly—I may say disgraceful—row."

"Yes, miss; it's that da——" Dobbins caught himself, but the effort almost caused a fit of apoplexy. "Beggin' your pardon, miss, it's that new groom, Casey. Ever since he saved you in that runaway last week, he's been that impertinent an' disrespectful there's no good service in him. He laughs at my orders, an' tells me to go where none of my ancestors has gone yet, I'm hopin'. Just now he insists on smokin' a vile cigarette in the barn—rolls 'em with one hand, miss—an' when I tells him to immediately desist—them's my very words, miss—that I don't allow smokin' on the premises" (here Dobbins's right hand surreptitiously felt of the blackened bull-dog pipe in his own hip pocket), "he says, 'Ha! ha!'—just like that, miss; very provokin', you know. Then I pulls the nawsty thing from his mouth, an' he—oh, Lord! miss, what does he do—what does the bloomin' ruffian do, miss, but hit me so hard in the eye that I thinks a bally horse has kicked me, so help me!" Thereupon the perfect Dobbins tenderly nursed his damaged eye.

"Tell Casey I wish to see him at once."

"Yes, miss, but, beggin' your pardon, it won't do no good. Nothin' will except a plain discharge. He's a vicious limb, miss. Only yesterday I told him I should have to complain to you about his impudence, and he says, grinnin' all the while, 'Tell her, tell her, yer moon-faced roast-beef sandwich! I'm next t' th' red-headed fairy, an' she's th' main gazabo here—see?'"

"I—I don't understand, Dobbins."

"No, miss, I don't suppose you do, but it's extremely insultin'." Dobbins noticed that the rising sun seemed suddenly to bathe his mistress's face with a rosy glow.

"Nevertheless, summon Casey to me at once," she said, her voice ringing with quiet sternness.

Miss Merriam's perplexity was manifest by the little pucker on her full red lips. Casey's total lack of discipline was gradually

wrecking the long maintained, precise order of her father's model establishment. A magnificent horseman, and one whose striking face and perfect figure in livery were the envy of her friends, he had, in his comparatively short term of service, proved quite invaluable. Then there was the runaway incident, when he had lifted her from her bolting horse while dashing madly at frightful speed, as easily—— Well, she thought, with a dreary sigh, she must bear further and trust to the infallible system of careful, rigorous training which she should give him. Sometimes the look in Casey's clear blue eyes disconcerted her a little, and she never could quite reconcile the incongruity of his indescribable, idiomatic speech with his fine hands and features that undeniably portrayed an inherent strength of character.

Dobbins's rubicund face, garnished with a mushroom eye, appeared in the doorway. He turned his hands palms out, with an eloquently expressive grunt.

"It's no use, miss, it's no use at all. I takes him your order like a gentleman, miss, an' what does he say, miss?—what does the rowdy say? 'Tell Carrots I'm busy'!"

II.

For an instant Miss Merriam wavered dizzily, as the full significance of the insubordination dawned upon her. A burning crimson tingled her cheeks and her lips trembled a little as she vainly strove to control her furious indignation.

"Dobbins, go to the kitchen and put an oyster, or something, to your eye."

There was a gleam in Miss Merriam's brown eyes which meant impending danger for the recalcitrant Casey as she passed through the wide arch and paused uncertainly before the wet carriage wash-stand. Its saturated surface was not especially inviting to her dainty ties. From within came a careless, tuneful whistle. She almost gasped. Then, her small head upraised with a gesture of angry decision, and her flimsy skirt gathered up in both hands, she gingerly crossed the wash-stand on her high heels, not, however, without terrifying misgivings of the ludicrous spectacle she might present should she slip. She turned and entered the inner doorway, to see—Casey watching her with a broad, gleeful grin! It stiffened her into an image of frozen hauteur. In the moment's silence which ensued while she held him with her cool glance and endeavored to conceal her scorn and contempt, Casey's joyous smile faded, but his steady gaze never left her flushed face. It would never do to lose control of herself before this—this audacious, vulgar mongrel, she thought. Even then she pondered over the inexplicable fact that this mad-

dening servant had been to her alternately a creature of positive delight and one utterly worthless of reformation.

"Did yer want somethin'?" he asked indifferently. Again she noted the well modulated tone in his voice, in spite of the hideously grotesque manner in which he amputated his words.

"Did not Dobbins tell you to come to me?"

"Sure!"

There was a pause, during which she bit her lips, and one pointed toe beat a steady tattoo on the concrete pavement. Then she continued:

"Of course I should not waste another word with you, but pride forces me to continue trying. Casey, you are impossible—hopeless—and yet, if you have an atom of manhood, you will consider my position. Father's business keeps him in town most of the time, and consequently I am alone, as you know. Servants are very hard to get. This you also know. Therefore, I am at a disadvantage, a situation you have immensely realized by showing evident delight in imposing upon me. I can't understand why I even allow myself to discuss this with you, unless it be a mistaken idea that perhaps you may possess material for becoming eventually a good groom. Casey, you exasperate me beyond words, in that you not only fail to appreciate your own menial position, but have such little respect for me. Why is it, Casey, that you are not only disobedient, but are pleased to refer to me as 'Carrots'?" Her eyes widened as she saw a wave of dull red sting his face, and for the first time his eyes fell.

"That wasn't t'—show you up," he stammered awkwardly. "I don't mind red hair. 'Twas t' rile his nibs."

"His nibs?"

"Th' guy what t'inks he's th' real t'ing—Dobbins!"

"Dobbins is your superior—please be good enough to remember that."

"Not on yer life! I just walloped him 'n th' lamp fer gittin' too chesty, an' if he sep'rates me from me smoke ag'in, I'll hand him one dat'll shut off th' sunshine an' send him where he'll hear harps ting-a-ling an' birds a-singin'."

"Casey"—with a little, annoyed stamp of her foot—"will you kindly express yourself in plain English?"

"Soit'nly. Keep that English monkey on his own job, an' I'll take a fall out o' mine. On th' level, miss, I wouldn't hurt yer feelin's fer a bank roll big 'nough t' choke 'n ox. You've been kind t' me, an' I'll never fergit it. I read those books yer gimme, an' I'm sure goin' t' learn somethin'. I'll never call yer 'Carrots' ag'in—here's me hand on it." Almost before she realized it, her hand had fluttered in and out of his strong clasp, and she had nervously

turned to go. From the inner stable door Casey saw her pause with indecision at the sloppy wash-stand, and the next instant he had gently picked her up by the arms and lightly deposited her on the other side of the slippery surface. It was an apparition which caused the phlegmatic Dobbins to stagger back weakly against the kitchen screen door and open his mouth in paralyzed horror.

"Kin I smoke in th' barn, Miss Jane?" humbly asked Casey.

"Well, if—if you are sure there is no danger," she replied lamely, and then hurried toward the house with her head in a whirl, entirely ignoring her intended critical inspection of the brilliant floral sun-dial.

III.

ROSE-RIDDEN June had glided into July without bringing any change in the servants' quarters at Oceanview. Since the day when Dobbins suddenly became possessed of a finished black eye, there had been no fisticuffs in the stables. Dobbins adroitly dodged disastrous collisions with the belligerent Casey by carrying all innovating suggestions concerning his equine charges to his mistress with punctilious ceremony. From her Casey received his orders with his same smile—a most peculiar smile, Miss Merriam observed—and performed his duties with cheerful dispatch. Casey now consumed enormous quantities of cork-tipped cigarettes at his own sweet will, and if, perchance, the pungent Turkish tobacco rolled Dobbins's way in challenging, defiant clouds, the latter gave no further heed save to disdainfully elevate his *retroussé* nose. Casey's chief duty was to canter after Miss Merriam daily. Often, upon some slight pretext, she would send him ahead and then secretly enjoy the sight of a groom riding as if both man and horse had been moulded together. Of all the men she had known, none walked or rode with the graceful ease of this groom. There had come a marvelous change in the manner and form of his servile attentions to her. Not that he ever lapsed into any other attitude than that of deference and humility, but in the small things, in the little attentions which mean so much to a mistress, he was peculiarly adept. In fact, none of the men she had grown up with, through germans, house-parties, and a host of other superficial functions, possessed the attentive cleverness, the alluring charm, of Casey when he was looking out for her. Even though it were nothing more than holding her stirrup or opening the carriage door, there was the polished finish, the subtle sense of responsibility, the intuitive, almost uncanny, anticipation of her wants, the absolute correctness, in his conduct which unconsciously made her depend upon him more and more. It was when he spoke that the disillusioning transition was complete. Then the adequate, faultless Casey instantaneously tumbled from his high pedestal

and lay shattered at her feet, a shapeless mass of clay, seemingly unworthy of remoulding.

It was a scorchingly hot July morning when Miss Merriam awoke, to find the heat already oppressively foretelling a day of withering, radiating torridness. Determined upon a cool ante-breakfast plunge, she slipped into a becoming bathing suit, and had paused to shiveringly immerse her toes in the surf, when she heard a sound behind her and turned—to behold the ever-attentive Casey shutting a bath-house door. She noticed his bathing suit was of the latest cut, and then—their eyes met. She was conscious of an annoyed, almost petulant feeling at the unexpected intrusion. Then she grew furious as she felt her face coloring hotly when she detected the marked admiration in her groom's covert glance. How dare he! The next instant he had considerably moved along the beach, but he halted when she called:

"Casey, I did not intend to prevent your swim. It looks large enough for two."

"T'anks, miss, fer lettin' me use th' same ocean, but I'll feel warmer down th' shore—there won't be no iceberg near me."

As she cut the water in angry, vigorous strokes, over and over in her mind rolled a settled determination—to discharge Casey that very day. No matter how necessary he had become, she had borne with him beyond human endurance. She had submitted to disobedience and impertinence, but she could not overlook a deliberate, wilful insult. He was so insufferably coarse and vulgar, and when he looked at her as if—a sharp, shooting pain in one knee caused her suddenly to stop swimming and fairly gasp with acute suffering. She kicked out wildly, endeavoring to free herself from the band of benumbing, agonizing torture which had mercilessly fastened upon her with a deadly, convulsive grip, but the spasmodic effort only increased her aching torment. She began to tread water with one foot, hoping the cramp would leave, but, even in her imminent peril, instinctively she rebelled against summoning Casey. This being rescued every day by one's groom savored of cheap romance. It was absurd, and by that odious creature, Casey, after his inexcusable, unpardonable—er—where was he, any way? Would that excruciating, tearing pain ever cease? Then, when she found she could no longer tread with one foot, when the unendurable agony was making her faint, her clear voice rose in a long, terrified scream:

"Cas-ee-e-e!"

As if by magic, a cool voice responded in her ear:

"Yes, Miss Merriam. Please place both hands on my shoulders—so—and don't be frightened—it's all right." Mechanically she obeyed, and then in her half dazed, exhausted condition she knew

some one was swiftly drawing her through the water. The quiet, commanding voice she had recognized, but the correct language was marvelously new. Doubtless the fancied change in his speech was due to her unnerved condition. The shapely head of fine dark hair bobbing so near was certainly Casey's—then she forgot all else in her keen admiration for the speed he displayed, and in the smooth workings of the long, sinewy muscles of his snow-white shoulders, which felt like supple cords of steel beneath her clinging hands. They scrambled through the tumultuous surf, up out of reach of the hissing foam, and then Miss Merriam awoke to the fact that she had firm hold of her groom's hand. Her first impulse was to hastily withdraw her hand, but it lingered in his firm grasp until he had led her to a sand dune, upon which she weakly dropped. He stood respectfully by, while she sought to appear unruffled and serene, mindful of the rampant tumult in her heart, and that she ought to say in a most business-like way: "Casey, you are a perfect treasure of a servant." Instead, what she did say was:

"I am again indebted to you. I—I shall always be grateful. You must be tired—won't you sit down?" she added in a low voice.

"No, t'anks; I'm all right. Lucky I was near. I seen yer when yer stopped swimmin', an' I knowed somethin' was wrong. You've got good nerve, all right, all right"—turning his gaze upon her admiringly. She was still shaken and broken with the wonder of her escape, which accounted, she reasoned, for not instantly resenting his bold glance.

"I am glad to hear that your speech is better. Are you trying to improve it?"

He nodded and silently rolled some object in his mouth from one cheek to the other. He reddened under her questioning gaze, and then said in explanation:

"I read in one of th' books yer gimme how a great spieler learned how t' talk by goin' t' th' seashore an' puttin' pebbles in his mout', so I——" He paused, while she eyed him suspiciously. Then, with a rippling laugh, she cried:

"Oh, you mean Demosthenes!"

"Yes, he's th' guy."

"Well, you *are* progressing. Let me see your pebbles," she said mischievously, and then in amazement saw his face grow to a fiery, uncomfortable red. She leaned forward to inspect the object he had obediently taken from his mouth, and then raised her eyes to his face with a puzzled expression of distrust. What he held was a small gold skull and cross-bones. There was a painful silence, which he finally broke with an effort.

"I—I lied 'bout th' pebbles—'cause I didn't want t' give up th' pin. I—I found it—in th' road. I s'posed 'twas yours."

"It is *not* mine"—with a chilling decisiveness; then she added: "But why did you place it in your mouth?"

"'Cause—'cause I thought 'twas yours, an' I didn't want—t' lose it." In another moment he was rapidly walking up the driveway.

IV.

A FULL moon hung suspended over the ocean, its lambent glitter reflecting on the water like a huge bar of silver. After an interminable day of unrest, she had sought the shore, trusting that in the calm, monotonous wash of the waves she might find some peace for her riotous brain, which had been torn since morning with distracting thoughts of Casey; not of Casey the groom, but of Casey the man. Was he really just what he seemed to be? She recalled the challenging gleam in his eyes, and now at the bare recollection her own heart took sudden fire. Her hands clasped nervously as with straining eyes she gazed afar and half breathed aloud:

"Oh, I could dare much—to-night!"

She started in affright as a step sounded near, and turned to see—Casey. She noticed his manner of vague melancholy, his attitude of complete dejection, and waited in almost breathless suspense for him to speak.

"Was yer wantin' anythin' special of me t'-morrow? The cook says a crowd is comin' t' visit yer."

"Yes, I am expecting guests to-morrow for the week end. However, I think I shall require nothing more than usual, thank you, Casey." Still he lingered. "Did you wish to say anything else, Casey?" she questioned. She hardly recognized her own voice.

"Yes," he answered; "I have a great deal to say. I am not what you think me."

Her startled eyes saw the appeal in his glance, and still further down in their hidden recesses of blue was something which caused her to place a hand to her heart as though in pain, and she trembled like a wind-shaken leaf. Her head bowed, and she seemed conscious of the soft fire of his eyes on her hair. Her voice came slowly:

"Wait one moment, please. Do you mean that you are not—a servant?"

"I'm nothing so worthy. I can think of absolutely nothing fit to express my abasement, my total self-degradation. My masquerading here as a groom has been malicious and for the deliberate purpose of deceiving."

"I—I would rather not hear about it. Can't you begin anew—now it is all over with?"

Impulsively he stepped forward, and paused as, involuntarily, her hands uplifted.

"I shall tell you, nevertheless," he said. "It is right you should enjoy my humiliation;" and his face grew white and drawn.

"Please do not," she begged, strangely fearful and not knowing why. "Wait—wait until—to-morrow, and perhaps then I shall—not care to hear it—perhaps never. I really want to think it over."

"Suppose, Miss Merriam, I have done something despicable, dishonorable; could you ever forgive it?"

"Yes, if—if you were honestly sorry."

"Suppose it were something dishonorable which concerned—which concerned you alone—would you still forgive me?" Her eyes met his unflinchingly as she replied in a tense voice:

"I should—still forgive."

An instant later he had glided over the lawn and disappeared in the fringe of pines with the lithe grace of a panther, while she stood rooted to the spot, absolutely speechless. She was tingling with choking mortification and glorious pride, disgraced, yet happy, filled with wild rage at him and at herself, and withal horribly frightened. Without right or thought or reason, he had quickly drawn her to him and deliberately kissed her, and she had shamelessly—returned it.

Of course she had been kissed before—in her younger days by force or stratagem by her playmates, and later through forgetfulness of the proximity of the holiday mistletoe—but never had she been kissed like this before. For an instant he had held her tight and breathless, for an instant his physical attraction, the compelling warmth of his desire, and his gentle strength, had overwhelmed her. She raised one trembling hand to her head, and then as the magnitude of what had taken place, and of her own complete surrender, dawned upon her, she sank helplessly to the sand and burst into heart-rending, passionate tears.

V.

THE initial dinner had been a success, and the admirably balanced, thoroughly congenial party seemed most auspiciously inaugurated for its week-end jollity. During a lull in the conversation Miss Merriam caught the words of the man nearly opposite:

"It was a very peculiar wager, and thoroughly caddish, you know, and the strange part is, Kenneth Wells was never considered that sort of a fellow."

"Isn't it worth telling to all?" she questioned amiably. "You see we are quite attentive."

"I did not get the story first hand," he responded, "but I know

most of the men, and Wells, especially. It grew out of one of those simple, aimless discussions which often arise during a club evening. This one concerned that unknown, invisible magnetism, or whatever else you may choose to call it, which relentlessly draws a man and woman together, whether they will or no. Wells has lived abroad for the past five years, and last winter, shortly after his return, he left his home in Boston for the warmer delights to be found in the veneered, treeless abiding place of the Knickerbockers. It seems that Wells became positively rabid on the subject, claiming that marriages of convenience were not half as injurious to the social fabric, or body politic, as those marriages which resulted from the constant association of the man and woman where the inevitable yearning of a Jack for a Jill terminated invariably in a loveless alliance."

"What a barbarian!" exclaimed a girl from across the table.

"Perhaps so," smiled the speaker. "It was his pet theory, apparently, that nice girls grew infatuated with men who were mentally, or by birth, vastly inferior, where there was a close association of long duration, through business, or in the relation of master and servant, provided that the man possessed physical beauty or great strength, two things to which, he claimed, no girl, were she ever so highly cultured or royally bred, was wholly indifferent. In proof of this, he offered countless examples where riding teachers, tutors, and even grooms had conquered."

"A most anarchistic person," broke in Miss Merriam. "I wonder he doesn't long for a return of the good old days when your magnetic savage went forth to woo his bride-to-be with a club."

"Well, really, you know, Wells is just that sort of a lawless, impetuous person," the narrator replied. "He finally offered to wager ten thousand dollars—the amount to be given to charity—that he could himself procure a position as servant in a household where there was the usual unattached, beautiful lady, and be accepted by her before August first, and, by Jove! they made the wager with him then and there."

"Yes, but what would happen after he was accepted?" asked Miss Merriam.

"Well, now, you know, I fancy that would be a most distressing situation for him. I suppose he would appear not to have the faintest instincts of a gentleman, to be lacking in decency, a bounder, and all that sort of thing, but, really, he is a most charming and talented chap. His only faults are the enviable ones of too much money and belonging to a family which fairly reeks with antiquity. At any rate, they have not heard from him since, and it is supposed he is now wooing some exclusive miss who will not be able

to withstand his deadly fascination, which probably he exerts upon her either while standing behind her chair at table, or as a tiger in the pony cart, or—as you suggested, Miss Merriam—perhaps with a club.”

A busy hum about the table followed, during which Miss Merriam turned to the man on her right and asked:

“Mr. Byron, the man who just told us of the—the very odd wager—is he a member of any college fraternity? I noticed a skull and cross-bones pin on his waistcoat, and wondered at its meaning.”

“I should say he does,” he enviously replied. “That represents a hoary Yale senior secret society known as ‘Bones.’ An election to it signifies either the summit of college popularity, high standing, or athletic prowess at that university. The tradition about those pins is that the owners are never without the emblem, sleeping or waking, even to the extent of holding the grewsome insignia in their mouths while bathing—er—are you injured, Miss Merriam?” The stem of her wine glass had snapped in her hand.

“What a silly thing to do!” she laughed, holding up the broken crystal. “I must——”

“Oh, Jane!” cried an excited girl in blue, who sat opposite, “we have just discovered that horrid man’s time is up to-day, because to-morrow is August first. We’ve taken a vote on this side of the table as to his success or failure. It’s a tie, four to four, and we want you to cast the deciding vote. Do you think he has won or lost, Jane?”

“I think he has—I think it is time to seek more comfortable rooms,” she replied brightly, and they arose amid general laughter at her adroit parrying of the question.

She paused in the wide hall to press a button, and in the few moments’ wait stood with clasped hands, silently looking out and beyond the open doorway. The moon’s glistening rays had turned the myriad dewdrops on the spreading expanse of lawn into glittering jewels, and far out to sea a sail slowly crossed the moon’s silver path, but she saw it not. A soft-footed figure approached, and then she spoke:

“Ah, Dobbins, tell Casey I wish to speak with him—at once.”



INSIGNIA

BY CLARENCE URMY

Not the dreams, but their remembrance; not the kisses, but their
scar—

These are frontlets, grimly showing what the pains of loving are!

THE AMERICAN GENTLEMAN

By Minna Thomas Antrim

THREE holy ancestors give no man sesame to Heaven. Neither is the title "Gentleman" the result of three grandfathers. But they help.

A Gentleman is known not by the company he keeps in with, so much as by that he keeps out of. He is selective, choosing his acquaintances—as a young widow her willows. Not that he is haughty, but he will not know the wrong people for him to know. With his superiors or his equals he spends his time. Where gentlefolk meet goes he with expectant joy, and where the great abide there too wends he his permitted way.

A Gentleman possesses most of the qualities of the manliest man, and a few of the qualities of the most womanly woman. So, too, a man worthy of his acquaintance must be manly. One worthy of his friendship must be a Gentleman bone deep and brain through. Shuns he the braggart, loses he the prig, and flees he aghast from strange women's rustlings. He prefers books to blather, and solitude to bores. When he frequents Club-land, as a Gentleman may, he lowers darkly upon those who talk like the Heptameron or the Biblical Ass. Evil communications he avoids, lest his manner become corrupt.

He is arduously attentive to business—his own. The sorrows of his neighbor concern him, but never his affairs. Listen to vain babblings he will not, nor interpret the uplifting of Scandal's brows. He is a lover of peace—he often buys it at great expense.

He is a respecter of convictions—as in religion, so in politics. The Lion and the Lamb of gentle breeding have lain under the same down-quilt without the shedding of blood or even the loss of a hair.

But think not that he lacks humor, nor that in the sanctimonious man his soul delights. Not so. Wit he has, perchance; also is he serpentinely wise—at times; but, most of all, he is normal and fun-loving. When amused, he chortles, or chuckles, in toneless glee. Composure is as indicative of his class as is clamor of its antithesis. Poise is his hall-mark, and repression nine points of the law of his being. The trousered gusher he abhors.

'Ware the "Perfect Gentleman"! He usually smells to heaven,

oils his locks, be-ties and en-socks himself violently. Also he "explodes" when "tickled." His feet and hands seem to belong to another. His manners are effervescent

A real Gentleman always knows what to do—and sometimes does it. Although never aggressive, he has views, creeds even; but his saints live in the skies. He has ambitions. He would like to be President, and right; but if wrong, he'll accept the Presidency and mend his ways. Given his choice, he'd prefer a United States Senatorship.

The American Gentleman is never insecure. His values are carefully estimated. His own measure he takes without prejudice; that of his contemporaries without belittling them. Individuality is his fetich. He is so devoted to it that when he marries his wife is encouraged to retain her own.

He is a creature of the water. His tub and his razor are his weapons against self-disgust. He considers clothes important, but he prefers a shabby coat to a shabby act—and often gets his preference. No matter how deft, there was never a tailor sufficiently canny to disguise a vulgarian. Nor can bad tailoring rob a gentleman of his title (it may of his poise).

Sincerity is his besetting characteristic. He never enters the House of Lies, unless to rescue some hapless sinner. Having no fear, a lie seems to him most paltry.

The difference between a Gentleman and a Snob is, one lives for others, the other by them. An American Snob would rather tie a duke's shoe-lace than walk arm in arm with God's noblest. The Snob has a serf's heart, a beast's instinct, a peacock's pride—and tentacles.

The Gentleman is the patron of Progress, and while he loves to read the world by the candle-light of a hundred years ago, he thanks Heaven with unction for the electric button that saves his shins upon entering the House of Darkness.

Old Gentlemen are delightful when they honor their own gray hairs. An American courtier of seventy is a beautiful sight. No lady to the manner bred is there who to do him reverence would not turn younger knights away.

Middle-aged Gentlemen are unknown quantities. Modernity has no midway. Its men have no meridian. Gentlemen are "young" or "old;" vulgarians are very old young men or very young old men.

A Gentleman caught young is charming, especially to women, and about him there remains something of the boy until he dies. He exudes normality. In sports his soul delights. Yachts may sail beyond his owning, but during a close race his pulses hammer. He may own no hunter, but the baying of hounds and the clatter of hoofs are classic delights to Gentlemen-born and Gentlemen-made.

He has found nothing more valuable and less costly than politeness.

He is polite. The courtesies are initiatory parts of an American's education. Train up a boy in the way he should act toward woman, and depart from that way will he rarely. When he does, it's her fault.

Toward woman the American man's attitude is fine. She is neither his deity nor his doll. He simply treats her with deference. His chivalry has as little to do with saccharine utterances, scraping feet, and bended knees, as has his patriotism with hysterical shriekings and the waving of ensanguined flags. He is stronger in his silences and apparent submission to the ladies of his household than the most blatant vulgarian who prates of domestic domination.

Place aux Dames is more than a phrase to the American man. His inborn respect for her "rights" often causes him to sacrifice his own God-given privileges. Upon the face of the earth or upon the waters thereon exists no more chivalrous being than the American Gentleman.

Goethe averred that the incontestable proof of a tender heart was to love often. Americans have tender hearts. Nevertheless, a Gentleman fights shy of the petticoated honey-server, and sprints from the "sister" to many. Well knows he that such sisters fain would end by marrying a brother.

The Dolls of the World have the same sort of fascination for him as the cavortings of other helpless little animals. Their petty jealousies, their passionettes for Lions, their title hunts, and their booky babblings fill him alternately with pity and contempt. He would as soon marry a bad woman as a mad woman of this description.

From the altar of Hymen keeps he a long, long while away. To him it is appalling how many fools rush in—and out. Rushing is not his habit. A true woman is his ever increasing delight. If a false weight is an abomination in the sight of the Lord, so is a false woman in the sight of man; and, yet according to his temperament, gusts of infatuation, and tempests of the senses, may incite him to indiscretions. When the piper sends in his bill, however, he manfully pays.

Finally, the Gentleman decides to marry. Goes he therefore out into the Wilderness of Woman, seeking his "Golden Girl." His itinerary is inspiriting. It is conducted with calm. She need not have money, he tells himself. Gentlemen in America never marry women for their money, nor do they refuse to marry women who possess it. She need not be beautiful. For his wife he needs no superwoman; but she must be good.

As a wooer, he is ideal. Her little sisters—American Beauties—plead to her for him, and sends he to her also the kindly fruits of the earth. Books, too, are his messengers. With patience he woos her, and not without skill. To love one woman—at a time—is part of the American's code. Also he believes the price of a good woman is a marriage certificate. He would offer her no less.

Finally, with outward calm and inward flutterings, he asks her to be his wife. She accepts. They are married. According to his means, he provides a palace or a dove-cote, and they sometimes live happily ever afterward. Henceforth his ambitions crystallize. For others they are spurred.

A Gentleman-bred thinks as much of his sons as a Gentleman-born does of his grandfathers. To be childless is to be a failure in the eyes of our typical benedict. Americans have qualified often as bad husbands—idiosyncrasies and heredity assisting—but as a parent the American man is the marvel of the world. When he has wealth, he gives it to his children like a prince. When he is poor he toils for them like a slave and never mentions his labor, thankfully accepting the crumbs that fall from love's table. To "mother love" poets and painters have paid rich tribute. To "father love," who?

How waxeth our benedict with the circling of time? In marriage he expected to find woman's "clue." Has he? He is within your bailiwick, my brethren; inquire. As a benedict in the way he should go, goes he. Tries he to walk circumspectly every day—aye, and night. Sometimes he tarries with the revelers, e'en where Bacchus is king. For, since Solomon's reign, men of splendid lineage have looked too long upon the wine when it was red; but while their legs have become their masters, their tongues have remained their slaves. For in his cups a Gentleman is still a Gentleman, even if a foolish man.

In order to measure his wrath, endow him with "saintliness;" bewing him, and he flees his country. Recite his "excellences" from the roof-top, and—could he—would he have you jailed. From the stump alone he endures loud praise.

A Gentleman's *métier* is to avoid the spectacular, yet to be considered worth-while. The blare of trumpets heralding his approach appalls him. Given his choice, he'd rather be pilloried. As for haloes, what use has a man for such gear?

He preaches not. He has little to say concerning morals and piety. Until self is in subjection, he considers admonishing bad form. Who seeks comfort of him is given no human guide-book to Heaven.

The cultured American values azure blood, but to suit his taste it must be well mixed with red. He tells himself that birth spells mirth more often than worth in Free America. Also is he aware that while many crests are born, more are manufactured.

Toward the poor the American is a model. His ways are ways of pleasantness. He remembers a poor man's name as well as his face. He gives him his prefix. When he helps, he does so heartily. When he refuses, he tells the worthy suppliant why. To his man-servant he is master, yet friend. To his wife's maid-servant, he is as much the gentleman as to her guests.

Summing him up, the American Gentleman is neither a prig nor a poseur, claiming no immunity from the frailties of men. Knows he full well that the man who does needs a searchlight to discover his virtues; the Gentleman is simply a man made fine through the alchemy of time. At the sunset of life his faults have become so kindly that one wonders if the virtues of grosser men are not, in God's clear sight, less fair.



CONSUMMATION

BY MARY CALDWELL RICHARDSON

YOUTH came to woo me
 In the blossom-tide.
 I scorned Youth, and cried:
 "If Age should sue me,
 I would not spurn!"
 Now doth Age pursue me—
 Ah, Youth, return!

Love came and sought me.
 I shut my heart and cried:
 "Fame shall be my bride!"
 Now Life hath taught me
 I plead in vain:
 "See the change I've wrought thee!
 Love, live again!"



CONCLUSIONS

No matter in what language Love talks, we instantly understand. Those who make a sword of their tongue must expect to be cut occasionally.

"What a bore it all is!" cry the Butterflies, keeping on with obvious glee.

"Something New" is the most powerful tonic ever discovered.

Silence that should be broken for friendship's sake is worse than open enmity.

When Love can be found nowhere else, look in the House of Pain.

Esmé Allison

WALNUTS AND WINE



ABSENT-MINDED MR. DISCOBBLES

Mr. Discobbles's wife says that he is the most absent-minded man in the world. She finds it necessary to look him over every morning before he leaves for the city, lest he should appear at his office in his pajamas some day. Possibly affairs are not as bad as she thinks, but on the day that she entertained the Woman's Higher Culture Club, Mrs. Discobbles took great pains to caution her husband not to forget to purchase the Bridge favors.

"Now," she said in the morning, as he was about to leave for the day, "do please try and remember to go to Johnson's, next door to the office, and get twenty-five of the handsomest favors in the store and send them out here with a boy the first thing after dinner. I might send a messenger boy to get them, but I am afraid that he would n't know what to select, and you, dear, have such good taste! Now, don't forget to buy them—and pay for them. Don't have such a small bill charged."

Mr. Discobbles promised faithfully to remember, and promptly forgot all about the matter until he reached the office. Then his eyes lighted on the string his wife had tied about his finger.

"Great Scott!" he cried, "those favors!"

Half an hour later, as he was opening his mail, he came across a letter from his wife.

"Don't forget those favors," it read, "and be sure to pay for them."

"H'm, that's right," muttered Mr. Discobbles abstractedly. "I did nearly forget them."

Shortly after his receipt of the letter his wife called him up on the telephone.

Walnuts and Wine

"Have you got those favors?" she inquired.

"By Jove!" answered her husband, "I did almost forget them!"

At noon Mr. Discobbles left the office, to be gone the remainder of the day. At six o'clock he walked up the path to his home, tired but happy in the consciousness that his day's work was over.

At the door of the house his wife met him, in a plainly wrathful mood.

"Wretched man!" she cried.

Mr. Discobbles surveyed her amazedly for a moment, then an awful thought pierced his mind.

"Why," he stammered, "I did n't forget those favors after all, did I?"

"No," she cried; "but three times this afternoon you sent a boy here, with twenty-five of them each time!"

Frank H. Williams

EPITAPH

By Silas X. Floyd

Here lies poor Andrew Harvey Hoyle;

Ne'er shall we see him more.

The stuff he drank for castor oil

Was H_2SO_4 !

HE KNEW

A teacher in an isolated school situated in the cattle country of Wyoming, where the children learn their letters from the brands on cattle before they learn the alphabet, was endeavoring to teach her pupils the different sounds of *a* as denoted by the marks above the letter.

"Now, children," she inquired hopefully, pointing on the black-board to the letter and the mark signifying the long sound, "what is this?"

There was a long and discouraging silence; then an embryo cowboy cried excitedly as he waved his hand: "I know, teacher; that 's Bar A."

Caroline Lockhart

INFORMATION WANTED

He: "I am a confirmed bachelor."

She: "Indeed? May I ask how many girls assisted in the confirmation?"

George Frederick Wilson

Walnuts and Wine

MARK TWAIN OBEYED THE SCRIPTURE

In the Iowa town where Mark Twain used to reside, the following story of him is occasionally handed about:

One morning when he was busily at work an acquaintance dropped in upon him, with the request that he take a walk, the acquaintance having an errand on a pleasant country road.

"How far is it?" temporized Mark Twain.

"Oh, about a mile," replied the friend.

Instantly the humorist gathered his papers together, laid them aside, and prepared to leave his desk.

"Of course I will go," he announced; "the Bible says I must."

"Why, what in the world has the Bible got to do with it?" asked the puzzled friend.

"It distinctly commands," answered Mr. Clemens, "'if a man ask thee to go with him a mile, go with him, Twain!'"

Edith Brownell

A NEW SPECIES

Mamie, who saw a kite for the first time, rushed to her mother and asked: "Oh, mamma, what kind of a bird is it that has kindling-wood tied to its tail?"

Eva Dean

THE MAN WHO 'LL WRITE "2006"

By F. P. Smart

He 'll probably fly in the heights of the sky;

In the depths of the sea he will swim;

While the secrets that tole us to seek the North Pole

Will be surely no secrets to him.

He 'll know weeks ahead what the weather will be,

Without the assistance of Hicks;

He 'll have us all beat by the length of a street—

The man who 'll write Twenty-nought-six.

He 'll belong to no union, nor suffer from trusts;

He 'll be served with less foam on his beers;

In July he 'll buy ice at a nominal price,

And his cook will stay with him for years!

His municipal lights will make daytime look dark;

In short, he 'll have *no* cause for kicks.

Even autos will shy to let him pass by—

The man who 'll write Twenty-nought-six.

Walnuts and Wine

He 'll travel down-town in a strapless street-car,
For luxurious comfort designed;
And the nostrums he takes for his pains and his aches
Will be of the denatured kind.
He 'll be able to ask: "What *were* 'popular songs'?"
And "Pure as our politics"
May be in those days not a humorous phrase
To the man who 'll write 'Twenty-nought-six.

He 'll be a superior creature, no doubt,
Who will deem his great-grandsire a clown,
And thank the kind fate that cast *his* lot so late,
As he jauntily jots the date down;
But unless human nature has changed a whole lot,
And the brain has unlearned its old tricks,
For a month, more or less, it 's a pretty safe guess
That he 'll write it: 2005 6.

NOW, WHAT IS A LADY?

There were four of a kind on a corner. Said one of them to the other three:

"Say! yous fellows 'll slip up on that some day. Some day yous 'll be talkin' like that, and a lady 'll come along and she 'll knock the face off you."

S. Y.

THE RETORT COURTEOUS

Captain C. A. M. Taber, the mariner, poet, and scientist, who lives in Wakefield, Massachusetts, is responsible for the following little tale anent the arrogance of sea-captains.

It is almost impossible, he says, for a passenger to get anything like a civil answer from the commanders of some of our large ocean steamships. If you ask even the simplest question, in the most polite manner, you are likely to receive a gruff response.

One of these captains happened to be standing near the bow of his boat one day, taking observations with his glass.

"Do you know what ship that is?" asked a passenger.

"Go ask the cook," replied the captain, without taking the glass from his eyes.

"Oh, I beg your pardon," said the other. "I thought *you* were the cook."

J. B. Carhart

Walnuts and Wine

Matchless for the Complexion.



Not afraid of Chaps!

OF ALL SCENTED SOAPS PEARS' OTTO OF ROSE IS THE BEST.
"All rights secured."

In writing to advertisers, kindly mention LIPPINCOTT'S.

Walnuts and Wine

SOLID FOOD

An old South Carolina darky was sent to the hospital of St. Xavier, in Charleston.

One of the gentle, black-robed sisters put a thermometer in his mouth to take his temperature. Presently, when the doctor made his rounds, he said:

"Well, Nathan, how do you feel?"

"I feels right tol'ble, boss."

"Have you had any nourishment?"

"Yassir."

"What did you have?"

"A lady done gimme a piece uf glass ter suck, boss."

Celia Myrover Robinson

TRUTHS

He is an odd man who never tries to get even.

Too many commercial enterprises are too much enter and too little prize.

Marriage is often a tonic, but among the Germans it is invariably Teutonic.

In some parts of this country live chameleons and fireflies are worn. Nearly everybody in Belgium wears Belgian hairs.

Maurice Smiley

BALLAD OF THE SMILE-MAKER

By Charles P. Cleaves

We all of us wore the railroad face, for the car was
packed and hot,

And the quickest run on an August day is only a
stage-coach trot.

There were drowsy eyes and chins prolonged, and
every back was bent;

The water-boy—dead?—a babe unfed, and the dusty
air squall-rent.

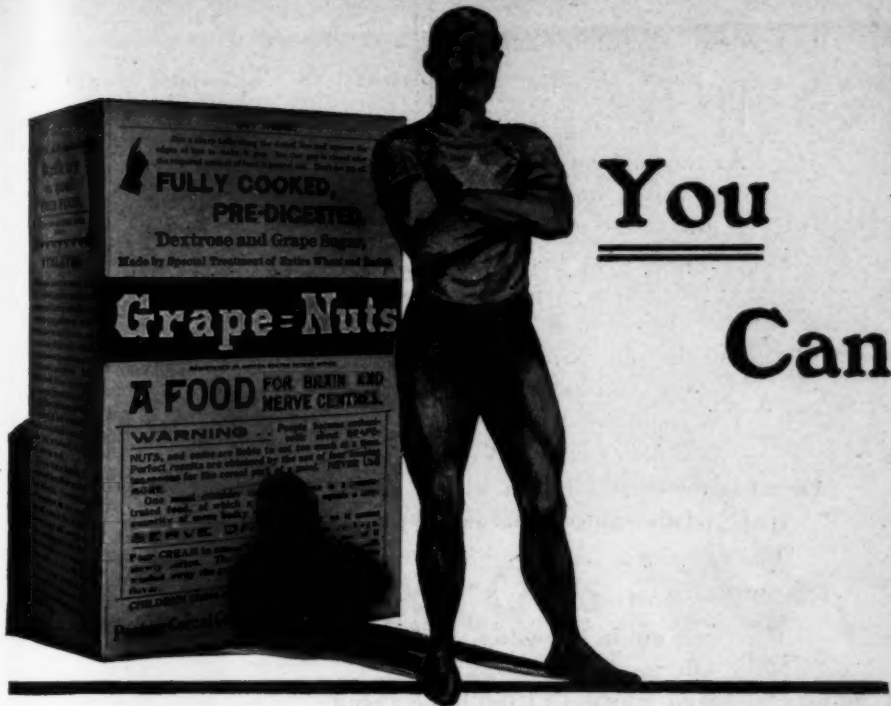
The news grew stale on the wilted page; the mildest
speech was tart;

The drummers dozed on the window-sills, and the
lovers lolled apart.

We lurched and stopped at Cranberry Croft, with a
frown-producing jar—

When a little girl with a genuine smile walked into the
railway car.

Walnuts and Wine



YOU
CAN

Nowadays the winning athlete and the successful thinker know that strength, energy, alertness, endurance, and brain-power are bound up in the familiar little yellow packages.

This food, prepared from field-grains—Nature's laboratory—by a food expert, contains proteids, carbohydrates, and the valuable Phosphate of Potash (which combines with albumen in the blood to form the soft gray substance which fills brain and nerve-cells) and builds up Modern Men to the highest degree of efficiency and power.

It's a matter of choice whether you will be strong, well, and brainy.

"There's a Reason" for

Grape-Nuts

Postum Cereal Co., Ltd., Battle Creek, Mich., U. S. A.

In writing to advertisers, kindly mention LIPPINCOTT'S.

Walnuts and Wine

That was four P.M.; at four-nought-five she smuggled
by the side:

Of the babe, who smiled, then the mother smiled, and
the three smiles turned the tide.

As the sunlight ripples across the waves where the
broken storm-clouds swept,

A gradual glow from the forward end o'er the whole
procession crept.

At four-fifteen there were twenty smiles; four-twenty,
a dozen more;

And the car was afloat with good, glad smiles—high
tide!—at half-past four.

You could see the light of sweet content o'er the
mother's visage creep

As the train rolled on with a lullaby hum, and the
babe smiled in its sleep.

GREEN—OH, SO GREEN!

They were out in the cutter. It was bitter cold.

She: "Oh, my fingers are so cold!"

He: "Well, why did n't you bring a muff?"

She: "I did!"

And he has been wondering ever since as to where she had
it, and why she did n't put it in use.

George Frederick Wilson

SENATOR AND PAGE

Senator Tillman sees more with his one eye than many men see
with two, but nevertheless those who see the fiery Southerner cannot
avoid noticing his misfortune. The other day he clapped his hands
for a page, from the cloak room door. A new page, who had not yet
mastered the senatorial names, responded.

"Tell Senator Clay," he said, "that I want to see him in the cloak
room."

The page ran on the errand, on his way stopping to ask the head
usher where Senator Clay sat. Then he asked: "Who's this that
has only one eye?"

The usher, thinking it a question in mythology, replied: "Why,
Cyclopes, of course."

The page delivered his errand in this astounding way:

"Senator Cyclopes wants to see you in the cloak room."

Willard French

Walnuts and Wine

"Hail to the Chief!"



Quaker Oats

Quaker Oats, the best and most generally eaten oatmeal in the world, established a standard of perfection in foods; the Quaker Quality standard. It is sold at the same price as the inferior brands. Large packages 10 cts.

Quaker Rice

(Puffed)

Quaker Rice is an ideal, ready-to-eat breakfast food. It is selected rice, perfectly cooked and nicely browned. Very strengthening and delicious to the taste and—what means most—it is Quaker Quality. 10 cts. a package.

Quaker Corn Meal

Unless you've eaten Quaker Corn Meal you don't know the great superiority of one kind over another. The eye sees the difference; and the palate and digestion call for Quaker Corn Meal after the first time.

3 lb. packages 10 cts.

(10c. Price not effective in extreme South and far West.)

The Quaker Oats Company

In writing to advertisers, kindly mention LIPPINCOTT'S.

Walnuts and Wine

OF THE SAME OPINION STILL

The small boy was saying his prayers. "Hawold be my name," he repeated.

"*'Hallowed be Thy name,'*" corrected his grandmother.

Again he made the attempt: "Hawold be my name."

Again the grandmother: "*'Hallowed be Thy name,'* Harold. Now try another time."

"But, grandma, Hawold be my name."

F. B. North

A TENNESSEE GENIUS

Opie Read tells this story. In a small village in Tennessee he had become acquainted with the goods-box philosophers around the general store. One day the subject of geniuses was introduced.

"Now," said one, "we had a genius over on Turkey Track once, named Bill Turner. Everybody said Bill was the laziest man in Tennessee—he would n't work nohow—but I said: 'Maybe Bill's a genius; give him a chance.' Well, Bill got married, and his wife had to scratch pretty lively, Bill not workin' none, but jest sittin' around dreamy like, an' whittling things out o' shingles.

"Well, sir, it was just like I said. After Bill had been married 'bout ten years, he called me in as I was passin' his house one day, an' with a smile of pride pointed to his work. Yes, sir, he was a genius, all right. He had rigged up a lot of wheels an' pulleys so that when his old lady rocked the baby's cradle, if she rocked kinder strong, it churned the butter an' pumped water an' run a saw fer sawin' stove-wood, all at the same time. Bill sure was a genius, all right!"

Emmett C. Hall

BETWEEN THE LINES.

By Florence Louise Hart

"DEAR TOM:

The violets are dear,
And thank you for the same"—
I wonder if you 'll ever dream
I kissed them when they came.

"This morning when I went to church
I pinned them on my gown"—
And thought how well they 'd match your eyes
Each time that I glanced down.

Walnuts and Wine

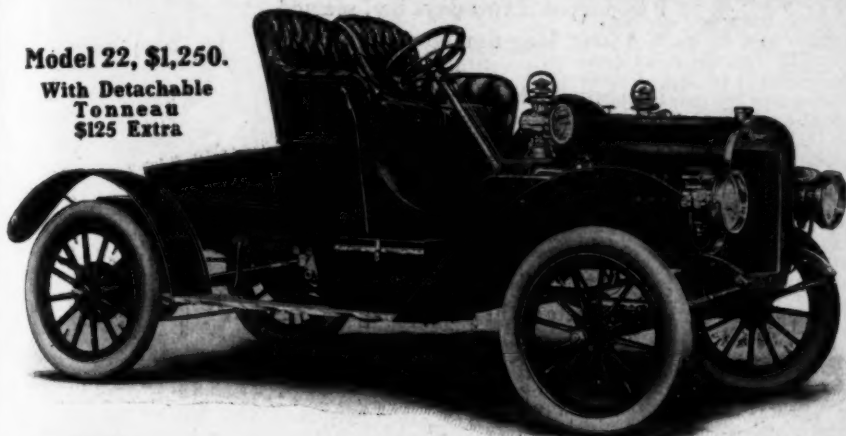


MODEL
22



Model 22, \$1,250.

With Detachable
Tonneau
\$125 Extra



Rambler

A powerful, convertible tourabout that is beyond question the most **Convenient, Economical and Serviceable** car ever built. As a two-passenger car it has racy lines and ample storage capacity for touring.

As a five-passenger car it has none of the unpleasant appearance of the earlier patterns of convertible cars, but a roomy, well balanced, comfortable tonneau and great surplus power for any road conditions.

The new Rambler unit power plant stands without a rival in compactness, accessibility and efficiency.

The new tilting body gives a degree of accessibility to the entire mechanism never before approached. You cannot afford to order your new car without examining the superb model.

Main Office and Factory, Kenosha, Wisconsin.

Branches:

Chicago, Milwaukee, Boston, Philadelphia, San Francisco.
New York Agency, 38-40 W. 62nd Street. Representatives in all leading cities.

Thomas B. Jeffery & Company

In writing to advertisers, kindly mention LIPPINCOTT'S.

Walnuts and Wine

"Their perfume rose as incense rare
The wondrous service through"—
And I hardly heard the sermon
For the thoughts they brought of you.

"Yes, call to-morrow evening, then;
To me it's 'ages' too"—
I wondered if two days had seemed
A long, long time to you.

"I'm sorry I had promised Dick
The dance you wanted so"—
I wish that Richard Butterworth
Had been in Jericho!

"Good-by, then, till to-morrow, Tom.
Your violets are dear"—
But sweeter still your thought of me!
"Yours always,

DOROTHEA."

GENERAL MILES'S THOROUGHNESS

Some years ago General Miles started to drive from Red Lodge, Montana, to Cody, Wyoming, to see his friend Buffalo Bill. The road was rough, and the reckless driving of the man holding the lines made it seem rougher, but the Indian fighter compressed his lips and clung to the seat without complaint. When near Cody, the general suddenly prodded the driver in the back with his walking stick and said curtly: "Driver, turn around."

"What?" exclaimed the astonished driver.

"Do as I tell you," commanded Miles. So the man turned the horses about and started back to Red Lodge.

"Now turn here," ordered Miles, after they had driven a few yards. Convinced that his distinguished passenger had suddenly lost his mind, the driver turned about once more and started for Cody.

"There!" exclaimed Miles, in a tone of satisfaction, as the side wheels struck a stone and he bounded into the air. "You hit it! Now, driver, you can go back to Red Lodge and tell them that you drove seventy-five miles and never missed a rock. You've hit them, every one."

Caroline Lockhart

Take a Fairy Bath Every Morning



THE man who invented the bath-tub should have a tablet in the Hall of Fame.

Regular bathing is an essential to health, as well as to cleanliness. The daily bath is worth all the squills and pills in the land.

The cold bath is preferable, for it is, essentially, a stimulant, while the hot bath tends to weaken. A cold bath is one of the best nerve tonics known. It causes a reaction, drives the blood to the internal organs, gives the whole body a sensation of warmth, and stimulates the mental faculties.

People who take a cold bath every morning, year in and year out, are healthier, other things considered, than the people who do not. They are, moreover, almost immune to taking cold.

Many claim that they cannot stand the shock of a cold bath. This can readily be remedied by starting with water that is slightly chilled, and gradually drawing it colder each morning, as the body becomes accustomed to it.

It is a mistaken idea that, with the daily bath soap is unnecessary. About 17 per cent of the waste matter of the body is daily discharged through the pores of the skin. This is Nature's sluffing-off process of dead and useless matter.

The exposed surfaces of the body are covered with bacteria—the smallest of living objects—some not over ~~1/1000~~ of an inch in diameter, and some as large as ~~1/100~~ of an inch. Water, alone, will not remove them, but soap and water will take these germs from the surface of the body, and, by cleansing the pores, destroy their food supply.

It can be seen, therefore, how essential it is that a pure soap be used for the toilet and bath.

A soap containing free alkali is harsh to the skin roughens and reddens it, and does absolutely more harm than good.

FAIRY SOAP is dependable—it is made from choice fats and pure vegetable oils. We purchase only the best possible to procure. A higher grade of materials is used in **FAIRY SOAP** than in any other white soap in America. We would be very brash to make such a strong statement unless we absolutely knew it to be a fact.

FAIRY SOAP will add to the pleasure of your daily bath. It lathers freely in either hot or cold water, soothes and softens the tenderest skin, cleanses thoroughly, and leaves the body sweet and wholesome.

Another feature of importance—it floats. It is always within easy reach; you don't have to dive for it.

And again—the shape of the cake is oval, fits the hand to a nicety, and is pleasant to use.

FAIRY SOAP sells for 5c—at all good grocery and drug stores.

THE N. K. FAIRBANK COMPANY
Chicago

Fairy Soap was granted highest possible awards at both St. Louis and Portland Expositions.



"Have You a Little Fairy in Your Home?"

Walnuts and Wine

ROOSEVELTIAN SPELLING?

A small citizen of Springfield, Massachusetts, made out a list of the things he hoped to receive for his approaching birthday, and this is what his fond mamma found recorded as the first item of all:

"Anew testimunt, reversed virgin."

Warwick James Price

IN TERMS OF PIG

The ingenuity of the Chinese in surmounting difficulties is well illustrated by the following dialogue, which recently took place on the Imperial Chinese Railway:

Traveller: "I wish to ship these two dogs to Pekin. What is the rate?"

Railway Official: "No got any rate for dog; one dog all same one sheep; one sheep all same two pig; can book four pig."

Traveller: "But one dog is only a puppy; he ought to go for half fare."

Railway Official: "Can do, all right?" Then turning to his clerk, "Write three pig," he said.

S. D. S., Jr.

VOUS AND VEAU

The class beginning the study of French was struggling with an exercise on the vocabularies. The professor, whose native language it was, suffered more than the pupils while giving out the English words for them to pronounce the corresponding French word. Presently it was the turn of one who had no gift for foreign tongues, though she had studied faithfully.

"Veal, calf," said the teacher.

"V-v-vous!" was the stammering response.

"Do you mean to insult me?" he flashed, sitting up very straight and looking apparently very angry; but instantly he joined the class in a laugh that was heard all over the building.

M. C. Kittredge

NO SOMNAMBULIST

Mr. Dunne, author of "Mr. Dooley," is an occasional visitor at a certain academy not far from New York. On a recent visit there he was accompanied by a well known banker, who, being impressed by the beautiful surrounding country, suggested that they should take a walk the next morning at six o'clock.

"Thank you," replied Mr. Dunne, "but I never walk in my sleep."

M. B. M.

Walnuts and Wine



*Forecast ~
Always*

FAIR

*for the
faces
that use*

For the Toilet

HAND

For the Bath

SAPOLIO

In writing to advertisers, kindly mention LIPPINCOTT'S.

Walnuts and Wine

GLEANINGS FROM A LIBRARY CATALOGUE

- "The Night-side of Nature," by Crowe.
- "Life in Sing Sing," by Luckey.
- "The State and Pensions in Old Age," by Spender.
- "Liquor Problems," by Wines.
- "Charges," by Rush.
- "The City Wilderness," by Woods.
- "Bible Languages," by Cust.
- "Hints to Travellers," by Freshfield.
- "A Tramp through Switzerland," by Leggett.

W. H. Clemons

A FEMININE ENDING.

Charlie, who was puffed up with the learning he was acquiring in the first grade at school, determined that the time was ripe to impart some little of his erudition to his five-year-old sister; so, seating himself before her, he said: "Katie, spell 'boy.'"

"I can't," whined Katie. "I don't know how."

"Oh, yes, you can," replied Charlie deprecatingly; "it's easy.

Say after me: B."

Katie: "B."

Charlie: "O."

Katie: "O."

Charlie: "Y."

Katie seemed puzzled, thought a moment, and then, true to her sex, said simply: "Because."

S. J. Kornhauser

"ARGUED BY THE WORKIN' MAN"

By W. Dayton Wegefarth

Sez Paddy Flynn t' me lasht noight, sez he:

"Begobs, me bye; it 's gettin' purty bad

Whin wimin folks, t' satisfy a fad,

Air takin' jobs frim ye an' me, me lad;

Sez Oi to ye, sez Oi, it should n't be."

At thot Oi ups an' answers widout fear:

"Indade, wid yez, me frind, Oi don't agree;

Fer anny mon would not contented be

Widout a gel t' run th' famalee;

A maid," sez Oi, "is born t' injineer."

MENNEN'S

Borated Talcum TOILET POWDER

MARCH WINDS

are powerless to harm the skin and complexions of those who acquire the good habit of daily using **Mennen's Borated Talcum Powder**, the purest and safest of soothing and healing toilet powders.

Mennen's is a satisfying finish of a delightful shave, the most essential item on a lady's toilet table, and in the nursery indispensable.

Put up in **non-refillable boxes**, for your protection. If Mennen's face is on the cover, it's **genuine** and a guarantee of **purity**. Delightful after shaving. Sold everywhere, or by mail 25 cents. **Sample Free.**

GERHARD MENNEN CO., - Newark, N. J.

Try Mennen's Violet (Borated) Talcum Powder. It has the scent of fresh cut Parma Violets.

Guaranteed under the Food and Drugs Act, June 30, 1906. Serial No. 1542.



In writing to advertisers, kindly mention LIPPINCOTT'S.

Walnuts and Wine

EXTREMELY RUDE

Delegate Flynn, of Oklahoma, tells with great glee of a conversation that took place between a Boston lady and an Oklahoma man with reference to things Western.

"I take it, ma'am," said the Oklahoman, "that you 've travelled considerable in these parts."

"Quite a good deal," answered the Bostonian. "As far west as California and Nevada, and I 've spent some time in Arizona."

"Have you ever seen the Cherokee Strip?" suddenly asked the Oklahoma person.

Thereupon ensued a painful silence. It was plainly to be seen that the Boston lady was much embarrassed. When she had in a manner recovered her composure, she observed:

"In the first place, sir, I consider your query extremely rude, and in the second place, you might have been more refined in your language by asking me if I had seen the Cherokee disrobe."

Edwin Tarrisse

SAD TO RELVIII

By Louise Ayres Garnett

A maiden who infrequently VIII

Would murmur: "Just pass me a plVIII.

I'm much too celestial

For viands terrestrial;

I'll have but a kiss and a dVIII."

AT A COLLEGE DINNER

"How did our old classmate Jorkins turn out?"

"Oh, he's the kind of man that's forever tied to his wife's apron strings."

"I remember hearing that he had married a leading lady."

J. M. Hendrickson

OVERHEARD IN BOSTON

It was her Thursday afternoon out, and she was showing her lately-arrived friend the sights of the town.

"An' these is the public gyardens," she said proudly, as they passed the Old Granary Burying-ground, with its summer adornment of flowers.

"Shure, 't is planted thick," was the admiring reply.

"Oh, they're not near all out yet."

A. W. Parker

Walnuts and Wine

For *SPRAINS* Use

POND'S EXTRACT

The Standard for 60 Years

Nothing else will so quickly relieve a sprain as POND'S EXTRACT. Bind the injured wrist, arm, or ankle in a cotton bandage and keep the bandage constantly moist with POND'S EXTRACT.

POND'S EXTRACT is the greatest all-round household remedy ever produced, and should be in every home ready for instant use.

*Get the genuine. Sold only in
original sealed bottles—
Never in bulk.*

Illustrated
booklet, "First
Aid to the Injured,"
sent free if you write.

LAMONT, CORLISS & CO., Agents
Dept. 11, 78 Hudson Street, New York

In writing to advertisers, kindly mention LIPPINCOTT'S.

Walnuts and Wine

A DANGEROUS MAIDEN

By Doris Webb

Fair Anna was a daring maid,
Who no authority obeyed.
With deadly weapons did she plot—
A smile that smote, a glance that shot,
And many others in the list—
My anarchist.

But I would not despair and yield
To leave her mistress of the field;
I found her off her guard at last;
I seized her hands and held them fast,
And then before she could resist
My Anna kissed.

THE COAT AND THE MAN

In an Italian seaport one time there lay an American man-of-war. Her officers took the occasion to entertain the officers of one of the Italian ships in the same harbor. The ornate uniforms of the Italian naval officers caused our American Jack Tars to gaze in wonder at their splendor.

During the inspection of the ship one of the resplendent Italians tripped and disappeared like a brilliant meteor down one of the hatches. A sailor who saw the fall rushed aft and, saluting the officer of the deck, said: "If you please, sir, one of them kings has fell down the for'ard hatch."

A. C. Hatfield

THOUGHT BETTER OF IT

He taught school in a community where it was the custom to pay the teacher's salary in produce. One old patron of the institution, however, did not send his regular quota of pork, beef, or potatoes. Days passed, and the produce was still not forthcoming. One day the teacher's mind was relieved by having the son of this patron say to him:

"Pa says he 's goin' to send you a hog to-morrow."

Visions of fresh pork began to pass before the eyes of the teacher. Two weeks passed, however, and the hog did not turn up.

Said the teacher one day: "I thought you said that your father was going to send me a hog."

"Yes," said the boy; "but that hog got well."

Benjamin Griffith Brawley

Walnuts and Wine

PETER'S

"High as the Alps
in quality."

THE ORIGINAL MILK CHOCOLATE

ALONE
AT THE TOP!

High above all other eat-
ing chocolates stands

"GALA
PETER."

Pure, wholesome
and "Irresistibly
delicious."

"You never grow tired
of PETER'S."

LAMONT, CORLISS & CO.,
Sole Importers, New York



In writing to advertisers kindly mention LIPPINCOTT'S.

Walnuts and Wine

NO REMINDER RECORDED

As Hartwell, a New York lawyer, stepped from the train to the platform of a little Virginia station, a negro porter advanced and touched his hat. "I know yo' is a drummer, suh. Show me where yo' grips is, and I'll carry um up to the hotel."

The lawyer smiled in a quizzical way. "I am a drummer," he said, "but a drummer of brains."

The porter sniffed suggestively as he said: "Huh, fust time ever I see a drummer as did n't carry no samples!"

Sally W. Leache

MILLIE AND TILLIE

By Harold Susman

"I feel in my bones," declared Millie,

"I never shall marry, alas!"

"But not in your wish-bone!" said Tillie;

And now they don't speak when they pass.

A PERSONAL APPLICATION

"Is this what you meant to say?" asked the advertising manager, reading a slip of paper that the village paint-dealer had just handed in.

"Is n't it all right?" asked the painter. "I said: 'The latest thing in cherry, mahogany, and Flemish oak stains for personal use.' Is n't that all right?"

"Some way," returned the manager reflectively, "furniture stains have never appealed to me as being suitable for personal use. Do you put them on after you shave, or how?"

"Oh, I see," said the man, scratching out the last line and writing another. "How 's this? 'The latest thing in cherry, mahogany, and Flemish oak stains. You can put them on yourself.'"

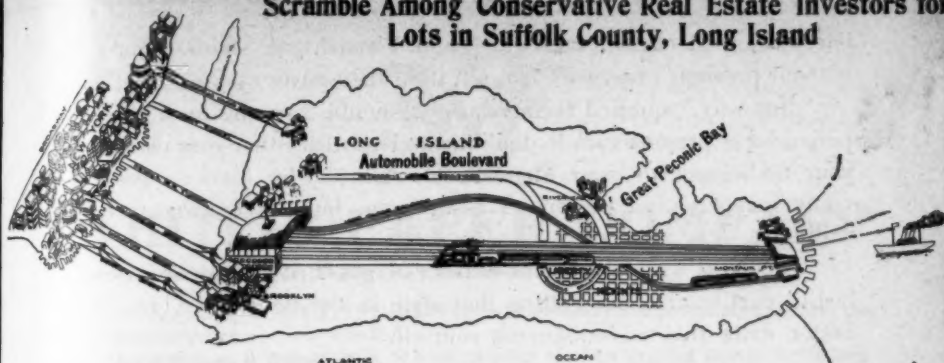
"But," remonstrated the manager gently, "I should hate to put them on myself."

"Well," said the painter, scribbling hastily, "perhaps you'd like this better: 'The latest thing in cherry, mahogany, and Flemish oak stains. Any lady can put it on herself.'"

"Now, imagine a lady," protested the critical manager, lifting his eyebrows, "putting that excellent Flemish oak stain on herself. No lady could be induced to do it."

"Well," amended the patient paint-dealer, "why not say: 'The

Scramble Among Conservative Real Estate Investors for Lots in Suffolk County, Long Island



Long Island real estate has founded many fortunes. An old Long Island farmer has just sold his 25-acre truck farm for \$200,000. An \$8,500 farm sold this year for \$400,000. These are but two instances out of many hundreds. Long Island real estate is going to found the fortunes of thousands of others. Those who invest now will reap splendid returns. Buying in the past was in lots on the Western part of the Island. All that is changed now. Investors are investing their money in lots further East. This army of investors has been led by the richest men in the country, who have bought large tracts all over Suffolk County. Small investors are following their lead and are now investing in Suffolk County real estate. Lots in Suffolk County are now cheap—but they will not be so very long. Why have the richest men in the country—the men who know what is being done and what is going to be done in Suffolk County—bought up those tracts of land?

THE REASON WHY is shown by an impartial extract from the "Railroad Man's Magazine":

A GREAT NEW SEAPORT:

"It must be remembered that the Pennsylvania Railroad owns the whole of the tip end of Long Island, Montauk Point, and has been holding it in reserve for years, allowing no improvements, but just keeping it free of incumbrances—for what purpose? **THAT PURPOSE IS NOW IN SIGHT.** It is that Montauk may be made one of the great seaports of the country. The port of New York is already inadequate to the demands of ocean steamships. Why not develop Montauk as an auxiliary seaport for the Penn system and save the difference in time between steamships and railroad speed?"

"Since, by means of its new terminal in New York and its tunnels, the Pennsylvania can soon run trains straight through to Montauk, who knows but what ocean steamships may **IN A LITTLE WHILE** dock at Montauk and send travelers and the hordes of immigrants thence by all-rail routes to any place in the Union?"

This tells the whole story when you add that New York is the metropolis of the Western Hemisphere and grows at the rate of half a million souls a year. The greater part of all the trade is carried on from New York. Every year hundreds of thousands of immigrants land, and a very large proportion live on Long Island. It means that any one who owns a lot in Suffolk County, on the line of the railroad from Montauk to Brooklyn, has one of the most profitable investments in the world.

LIBERTY HEIGHTS is in Suffolk County, Long Island. It is directly in the line of march of these vast new transportation improvements. The hundreds of thousands of immigrants will pass directly through Liberty Heights. All the enormous export trade will be carried along these lines. We laid out Liberty Heights before this was made public. We got in ahead and are able to offer lots at lower prices than we could had we bought later. The value of lots at Liberty Heights increased 100 PER CENT. within three weeks after we bought them.

IMPROVEMENTS AT LIBERTY HEIGHTS Every train on the Long Island Railroad carries great loads of passengers and prospective investors. These are mostly New York people familiar with the ground and who know what they are buying. The largest number of our lots have been sold to New York City people. The improvements at Liberty Heights are modern and up-to-date. Magnificent wide streets—splendid electric-light service is about to be installed—a modern method of pure water—sewers, boulevards, parks, grand old trees—everything is done to make it the **GARDEN SPOT OF LONG ISLAND**.

SPECIAL INDUCEMENTS TO FIRST PURCHASERS

To early investors we offer very special inducements. No taxes or charges of any kind for three years after purchase. Lots can be bought on very easy terms. Any one who can save \$1 a week can afford a lot in this model and beautiful suburban spot. In case of death before lots are full paid, we issue free deed to your heirs. No mortgages or interest of any kind. Special inducements to those who build within a year from purchase. All improvements at expense of the company. Lots are all high and dry—level enough to build upon, with sufficient gentle slope to make an ideal drainage. Fine sea bathing on the beautiful beach below us. Splendid transportation facilities. Besides lying directly on the line of the Long Island Railroad—the finest equipped railroad in the United States—between Montauk and Brooklyn, over which will be hauled the greatest amount of freight, and the largest number of passengers of any Railroad in the world—there has just been surveyed through the property a new electric line. This will be splendidly built, and the highest grade of high speed steel electric trains will run over it. The \$2,500,000 Automobile Driveway from New York City—the finest and costliest in the world—will pass through Liberty Heights. This one feature alone will again double the value of lots within the year.

New York State has appropriated \$50,000,000 for improving its highways. A large portion will be spent on Long Island and it is intended to dedicate our main street to the State of New York. This will then be maintained forever at the expense of the State. It will be a "show street" as grand and beautiful as the magnificent streets of Paris and Berlin.

The present first prices of lots, 25 by 100 feet, \$35 to \$100 according to location, cannot remain in effect long.

If these brief facts interest you, write to us to-day for our free booklet, "**NEW TREASURE ISLAND**"—The Land of Golden Opportunities. It will show you how to lay the foundations of your fortune in the Millionaire's County. Do it to-day. There is nothing to be gained by waiting.

LIBERTY HEIGHTS IMPROVEMENT CO., Suite 300 Bourse Building, Philadelphia

COL. W. C. BROWN, President.

New York Office, Suite 2000, 60 Wall Street.

Walnuts and Wine

latest thing in cherry, mahogany, and Flemish oak stains. Folks without previous experience can put it on themselves?"

"But why," queried the manager, "should even the most inexperienced of persons *wish* to daub themselves with either your cherry, your mahogany, or your Flemish oak stain? I've known a great many inexperienced persons, I assure you, but not one has ever willingly——"

"See here," said the paint-dealer, "I guess, if you're so everlasting' particular about getting that stain in the right place, you'd better write that advertisement yourself."

Carroll Watson Rankin

ASPIRATION

By Louise Ayres Garnett

The budding youth is using now
His razor with a will,
And makes so many shavings he's
A human planing mill.

A PROFESSIONAL JUDGMENT

One evening a physician in Buffalo was persuaded by his wife to attend a concert, although he has no knowledge of or interest in music. A number of fine musicians gave evidence of their skill, but the doctor was extremely listless. However, when a certain lady came forward to sing the physician seemed to brighten up.

"Who is that contralto?" asked he.

"Contralto!" repeated his wife, surprised. "Why, she has n't a contralto voice—it is a high soprano."

The doctor made no reply.

"Don't you like her voice?" inquired the wife.

"Well," said the doctor, after a pause, "I really can't say much for the voice, but she has one of the finest bronchitises I've ever encountered!"

T

FULFILLING THE SCRIPTURES

Smith: "I wonder why Day always goes about talking to himself? Beastly rude to the rest of us, I think."

Brown: "I, on the contrary, am grateful to him for illuminating what I've always considered a rather obscure passage of scripture—"Day unto day uttereth speech."

L. C. Hatfield



WHITING PAPER COMPANY

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The superiority of WHITING PAPERS is so generally known and accepted that the fact barely requires a passing mention.

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THE great strides in every field of human activity during the century just closed have added thousands of new names to the lists of those whom the world delights to honor, a fact which the publishers of "LIPPINCOTT'S PRONOUNCING DICTIONARY OF BIOGRAPHY AND MYTHOLOGY" have recognized by giving that notable work of reference a thorough and extended revision.

The biographical notices included in previous editions have been brought down to date, and a great number of new names have been added: so that the book in its latest edition is complete to the opening year of the twentieth century, and stands to-day—as always since the publication of its first edition—without a peer among works of similar intent and scope. Among the many features of excellence which have called forth the highest praise from hundreds of men prominent in the affairs of mankind may be cited specifically the admirable system of Orthography, repeated on every page for the sake of convenience; and the comprehensive plan of Pronunciation, the data for which were secured by Dr. Thomas during an extended sojourn in Europe and the Orient.

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Buckram, \$15.00; half russia, \$17.50; half morocco, \$20.00

Publishers—J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY—Philadelphia

Walnuts and Wine

HE DID

"What is the matter, darling?" asked the anxious mother, when her small son came to her in tears.

"Well, you see, mamma, papa was hanging a picture, and he dropped it on his toe."

"But that is nothing to cry about," said the mother cheerily; "you should have laughed at that, sonny."

"I did," responded her small son regretfully.

Charles S. Gerlach

A MODEST MAN

By A. P. Jones

There's the man behind the gun,
When the battle bugle blows;
And the man behind the plow,
Where the thriving wheat crop grows;
And the man behind the throttle,
As his engine onward goes:
But as for me, I'm just plain Brown—
The man behind his nose.

ON THE FOREGOING

By Karl von Kraft

Hail, thou man behind thy nose,
Who thy modest bugle blows!
(And thy nose I mean not now,
Though with noses men may plow.)
While no throttle thou dost grip,
Still a bottle thou may'st sip
Till the color of the nose
Thou 'rt behind be as the rose
(And we 'll not make any bones
If plain Brown shades into Jones).

CHEAPER

Soliciting Electrician: "A burglar alarm in your house would cost you only fifty dollars."

Dubbs: "Great Scott! It would be cheaper not to alarm the burglar."

G. T. Evans

Walnuts and Wine

ORANGEINE "Talks"

Through Its

Perfect Formula and Prompt Results

A Great Physician says: "You don't have to talk **ORANGEINE**. Your Perfect Formula *talks* to everybody who has any medical skill or medical sense."

Acts quickly, thoroughly normally on

Formula Since 1892:

Acetanilla.....	2.4 Gr.
Soda Bi-Carb.....	1. "
Caffeine.....	.6 "
Homeopathic Tritura- tion of Mandrake, Blue Flag, and Nux Vomica.....	1. "
Total only	5. Grs.

Colds
Grip
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Common Ills
Offsets Chill and
Exposure

Prevents Sickness!

Secures Good Health!

25c Package Free for Honest Test

Orangeine is mailed anywhere, on receipt of price. 10c package (2 powders), 25c package (6 powders), 50c package (15 powders), \$1.00 package (35 powders). We will mail free, one 25c package, on receipt of request, with assurance of honest test, under suggestion of our directions.

The Orangeine Chemical Co., 15 Michigan Ave., Chicago

Selected from Thousands of Similar Tributes.

Mr. Edmund Murray, a well-known lawyer, of Brooklyn, N. Y., writes: "I have been using Orangeine for the past six years, and my experience has led me to believe, in spite of sensation mongers, that it is infallible. My mother, now in her 84th year, finds Orangeine very beneficial, and any effect, other than benefit, would certainly make itself felt in a person of her years. I conscientiously recommend Orangeine to all my friends and acquaintances."

Mr. J. W. Tillinghast, Buffalo, N. Y., writes: "Orangeine is wonderful, for all sorts of disorders, a ready and sure relief. Since we became acquainted with Orangeine, the expense for medical attendance in my family has been practically nothing."

Rev. Fred'k W. Hamilton, Boston, Mass., writes: "Orangeine Powders have been in use in my family for about three years. We have found them a most useful and reliable remedy. I can recommend Orangeine for brain workers who need a harmless and effective restorative."

Dr. Milo H. Aspinwall, Mgr. Keeley Institute, London, Eng., writes: "We find it quite impossible to get along in this treacherous climate without Orangeine Powders."

Rev. L. N. Wagner, Macon, Mo., writes: "It does me good to relieve people with Orangeine, and to see the change that comes over them in half an hour."

Mrs. Paul Kennelott, Wood Lake, Neb., writes: "Orangeine Powders are still our family friend. We call them the 'little golden-winged fairies', 'peace-makers', 'household helps', etc."

Maj. J. A. Olmsted, U.S.A., Retired, Des Moines, Ia., writes: "I certainly do live well by Orangeine, take it when necessary, which is not often, and it enables me to always feel well."

Col. Jo. W. Allison, Elgin, Tex., writes: "After seven years' occasional use of Orangeine, I am so nearly free from all ills as scarcely ever to need it, but it still is a never-failing source of relief when needed."

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An Intense & Unusual Romance

COLONIAL NEW ORLEANS

FOR SALE EVERYWHERE

Publishers J. B. LIPPINCOTT Co. Philadelphia

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Walnuts and Wine

RIGHT NOW

The master of a large Southern plantation would fire off a small cannon every evening at six o'clock as a signal to the people living on his land. One evening at the time for the usual boom the master was away. Two of his colored men, John and Jim, had long desired to fire the cannon, but had never had a chance to do so. They decided to make the trial on this afternoon, but thought that it would be best for them to have the cannon make no sound. It was decided that Jim should hold a water-bucket over the mouth of the cannon while John did the actual discharging. Soon there was a great boom, and John looked up to find that his friend was gone.

When the master returned, John was very busy in the field.

"John," said he, "where is Jim?"

"He went down to the spring afteh a bucket a watah, sah."

"When is he coming back?"

"Well, sah, ef he come back like he went, he 's sure due heah now."

B. G. B.

LITERAL

"Thank you very much for the candy, Aunt Mary," said Arthur.

"Oh," said Aunt Mary, "don't mention it, Arthur."

"But mamma told me to, Aunt Mary!"

W. B. Phipps

REASON ENOUGH

Clara: "No man will ever dare to trifle with my affections. I have five big brothers."

Louise: "They 'll trifle with yours sooner than they will with mine. I have five *little* brothers."

J. M. Hendrickson

RATHER PERSONAL

A college freshman named Hagar was constantly plagued by his fellow students, perhaps because he was non-combative and excessively diffident.

One Sunday when he escorted the president's daughter to chapel, the grinning and winking and nudging drove the poor fellow almost frantic; but the climax of his misery was reached when the president arose in the pulpit, and in a sonorous voice announced the text: "Genesis, twenty-first chapter and seventeenth verse: 'What aileth thee, Hagar?'"

Charles Lee Sleight

DANGEROUS DECEIT

THE RECKLESS ADULTERATION OF HOUSEHOLD NECESSITIES.

Every adulterated article is a cheat. The important feature of adulteration is that it corrupts and debases the thing adulterated. No matter what the form of adulteration may be, it is always for the worse, never for the better.

Adulteration operates in two ways. In one instance it is like a common pickpocket or a confidence man. It is designed to accomplish petty thefts of profits; to win unwarranted confidence by wearing a reputable appearance.

In the other case it is like the masked burglar who breaks into the home to steal. He is ready to kill if necessary. To make a dishonest living he will commit murder.

It is this class of adulterated articles which deserves unstinted condemnation. They are worse than the burglar. He wears the warning black mask of his deadly occupation. But the murderously adulterated medicine or drug enters the home under the guise of friendship.

This commercial criminality is aptly illustrated by recently published analyses of "Witch Hazel." Hundreds of samples bought at open sale in the West were found to contain *wood alcohol, formaldehyde, or both.*

Of 128 samples purchased at various drug stores in Greater New York, 54 contained *formaldehyde.* Less than 15 per cent. of the 128 samples were of the strength required by the United States Pharmacopoeia.

The worst feature of these poisonous or weak preparations of "Witch Hazel" is that they are often sold in substitution for POND'S EXTRACT, a household remedy of the greatest purity and highest strength.

All that can be done is to warn the public against purchasing "Witch Hazel" in place of POND'S EXTRACT.

When these so-called "just as good" preparations are offered, ask yourself—"Why should I accept a preparation claimed to be 'just as good' as POND'S EXTRACT, when the claim is made by an interested party,—interested in the larger profits paid by the inferior article?"

"If it is only just as good and no better what would be my gain in taking it?"

POND'S EXTRACT has been the standard for 60 years and has won its place in the homes of the land by merit. It has been fittingly called "the Old Family Doctor." In the interests of health and safety the public should refuse to accept any substitute for POND'S EXTRACT.



For Children While Cutting Their Teeth.

An Old and Well-Tried Remedy,

FOR OVER FIFTY YEARS.

MRS. WINSLOW'S SOOTHING SYRUP

has been used for over FIFTY YEARS by MILLIONS of MOTHERS for their CHILDREN WHILE TEETHING with PERFECT SUCCESS. IT SOOTHES THE CHILD, SOFTENS THE GUMS, ALLAYS ALL PAIN, CURES WIND COLIC, and is the best remedy for DIARRHOEA. Sold by all Druggists in every part of the world. Be sure and ask for **Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup**, and take no other kind.

TWENTY-FIVE CENTS A BOTTLE.

In writing to advertisers, kindly mention LIPPINCOTT'S.

Walnuts and Wine

CUSTER'S TRANSLATION

West Point's aim is to teach men to meet any situation with the best there is in them.

When General Custer was a cadet, he ventured into the French section room without having so much as looked at the day's lesson. The section had been engaged in the translation of *Æsop's fables* from French to English, but on this particular day the task consisted of a page of history written in French. Cadet Custer was given the book, and very bravely dashed into the translation of this sentence: "*Leopold, duc d'Autriche, se mettit sur les plaines de Silesie.*" But the Duke of Austria did not seem to appeal to him, for without hesitation he read:

"The leopard, the duck, and the ostrich met upon the plains of Silesia."

H. L. Johnson

THE FIRST OFFENSE

Tommy (who has been punished): "Mamma, did your mamma whip you when you were little?"

Mother: "Yes, when I was naughty."

Tommy: "And did her mamma whip her when she was little?"

Mother: "Yes, Tommy."

Tommy: "And was she whipped when she was little?"

Mother: "Yes."

Tommy: "Well, who started it, any way?"

J. Dickinson

HIS NEW MEDICINE

"How is your papa, Bessie?" asked a neighbor of a little girl whose father was ill.

"Oh, he's improvin' awfully!" the child answered. "The doctor is givin' him epidemic injunctions every day!"

Emma C. Dowd

A NICE DISTINCTION

"I've got the stupidest kitten," said my small cousin. "You can pinch her or kick her or maul her about any way, and she won't do a thing, not even peep."

"That kitten," I remarked, "is a Christian."

"T ain't," emphatically returned the wise little one; "she's a fool."

F. B. North

Walnuts and Wine

Stop at Columbia

South Carolina



IF YOU ARE
GOING
SOUTH

IF YOU DON'T you'll miss much. You'll miss the garden roses and the sweet-scented breath of the pines. You'll miss a temperature that's a happy medium between the languorous heat of Florida and the penetrating cold of the North. You'll miss the historic capital of South Carolina—a city abounding in memories of delightful anecdote, scenes of "befo'de wah" and since, of plantation days and of "Sherman's March to the Sea."

You'll miss one of the loveliest and most characteristic cities of the South, laid out in broad avenues shaded with rows of majestic oaks and magnolias and ornamented with many castles of that far-famed Southern hospitality, an environment and atmosphere which is not to be found in any other resort. You'll miss one of the healthiest cities in the world, located far above the sea level and high above the surrounding country. You'll miss unequalled opportunities for outdoor sports—golf, tennis, driving or motoring on endless smooth clay roads, riding on sandy bridle paths or fox hunting on the large expanse of unfenced country clearings, quail-shooting on preserves owned by hotel. And you'll miss *The Colonia*, the newest and most attractive hotel ever built in the South. It is of Spanish architecture and stuccoed walls, with red tile roof, dual towers, roomy loggias, unique public space, large exchange, ladies' and gentlemen's recreation rooms and sun parlors, etc.; all hardwood floors, baths and long distance 'phones in every room and all the newest conveniences and appliances that produce comfort, rest and enjoyment.

The Colonia is managed under the supervision of Mr. T. D. Green, of the Hotel Woodward, New York, and the exclusive Edgemere Club, Long Island, which guarantees Metropolitan cuisine and service.

The Colonia opened its doors for the first time January 1st, 1907, and will remain open throughout the year.

Columbia is in the heart of the long-leaf pine section, midway between Camden, Aiken, Augusta and Summerville, with railway facilities unequalled by any other resort in the South. Columbia is one of the principal stops of all through Florida trains of the Seaboard Air Line and the Southern Railway. It is also on their direct lines from the West.

For information and the handsomest hotel booklet published this season, write to

THE COLONIA, COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA
or HOTEL WOODWARD, New York Booking Office, 55th Street and Broadway, New York

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Walnuts and Wine

LEARNING

Soker: "I won fifty dollars from Bings last night, playing poker."

Joker: "Why, does Bings know how to play poker?"

Soker: "Not yet."

F. Morgan

AS USUAL

By Harold Susman

"Oh, doctor, could I only die!"

The suff'ring patient cried.

The doctor said: "I 'll do my best;"

And soon the patient died.

A BOY'S TRANSLATION

Little Tommy was relating to the mother of a chum, at whose house he was, that his father had been reading Shakespeare to him the evening before.

"Indeed!" said the mother. "And which of his plays did he read you?"

Tommy hesitated a moment, and then said quite confidently: "Oh, I know—'The Way You Want It.'"

Louis Repplier

THE HEIGHT OF PERFECTION

Ethel: "About how tall do you think a girl should be to look well?"

Jack: "I don't know exactly. How tall are you?"

Will S. Gidley

GIVE HIM SOMETHING HARDER

Senator Overman, of North Carolina, who is something of a punster, was recently approached by an acquaintance who said: "Senator, I have a name that will fix you now. I defy you to get a pun out of it."

"Let's hear it," replied the Senator.

"It's Dunlop."

"Oh, that's easy! 'Lop' off the end and it's 'dun.'"

C. P. R.